

INDIA TO INDIANA



Mar Aprem talks with Anna Eshoo,
member of U. S. Congress in Washington

MAR APREM
2002

ܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ

Ex Libris

Beth Mardutho Library

The Malphono George Anton Kiraz Collection

ܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ
ܐܝܬܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ
ܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ
ܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ
ܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܝܐ ܕܥܝܪܐ ܕܐܢܬܝܢ

Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

INDIA TO INDIANA

INDIA TO INDIANA

Via Dulles and Dallas

Mar Aprem

THRISSUR, KERALA, INDIA

2002

India To Indiana

Travelogue (English)

Author: Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem

B.D., M.Th., S.T.M., D.Th.

Metropolitan's Palace,

Thrissur - 680 001,

Kerala, India (Phone: 0487 - 420978)

E-mail : aprem@vsnl.com

Copyright : Author

Date of Publication: 22nd February 2002

No. of Copies : 1,000

No. of pages : 112

Printed at : MAR NARSAI PRESS, High Road,
Thrissur - 680 001

Published by : MAR NARSAI PUBLICATIONS,
High Road, Thrissur - 680 001

Price : Rs.50/- (India)
\$ 3 (Outside India)

Cover Design : Andrews Computer Graphics,
Thrissur - 680 005.

DTP : digitech dtp, Koratty - 680 308.

CONTENTS

	Page
Detailed Outline	6
Foreword	11
Preface	14
Chapter	
1. Chicago Synod	19
2. Bishop Mar Jacob Angadiath	39
3. Washington, D.C.	43
4. Orlando, Florida	64
5. Dallas, Texas	71
6. Indianapolis, Indiana	90
7. Photographs	105

DETAILED OUTLINE

CHAPTER 1 Chicago Synod *pages 19 – 38*

The 8th Holy Synod. Patriarch, Three archbishops, six bishops. Bishop Mar Yosip Isaac. Late arrival in Chicago after the Synod was over. Delay in getting American Visa. The names and consecration dates of six prelates who were consecrated before they had completed 30 years of age. The six prelates who were consecrated after they had completed 30 years of age. Bishop Odisho Oraham, Bishop Aprim Athneil and myself grouped together. Hospitality of Kando S. Mako and his wife Emily.

30 years of age minimum to become bishops. Out of 12 prelates of today, six were below 30 years of age when they became bishops. Education of the prelates. Monasteries. Guesthouses for bishops to stay. Language problem in the Holy Synod only for me. Interpretation by fellow bishops. Decisions of the 8th Holy Synod Maryam Kaku Lazar and other volunteers. Qasha Khoshaba Bouza, priest of the Mart Mariam Church, Rosalle. Benyamin Yalda, Sargon Aboona.

Santhosh Nadakavukaren and Suma P.Kammath of Downers Grove. Inter-religion marriages.

Graduation function in the Hanging Gardens on 17th June. Assyrian Language. “ Do you have a Master’s degree? “ Patriarch personally presented mementos. My joke about Paddy and Daddy. Senator John Nimrod, Sheba Mando, Robert Mulhim, William Michael. The book of Christoph Baumer in Morton Grove.

Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage get-together. Unny Mary & Alice. John & Anne. Reena. Supper in Americana restaurant.

Stay with Juliet Kasha in Chicago. Allergic to dogs. Telephone conversation with Rabbi Shoora Michalian , Assyrian musician in Sydney, Australia. Qurbana in Mar Geevarghese Cathedral on Sunday the 17th. Qasha Sleemon Hesquial. Bookstore. Asha and Paul Furlow attending Qurbana. Assyrians working under Furlow. Techlighting.

CHAPTER 2 Mar Jacob Angadiath *pages 39-42*

A new diocese for the Syro Malabar Church. Mar Thoma Church in Bellwood, Illinois 60104. Parish priest appointed as the first bishop of the diocese. Statement of Philip Kannukaden (Pylappan).

Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil of Cochin, Kerala. Archbishop Joseph Powathil of Chengannacherry.. Cardinal Francis George of Chicago. Hyatt Regency venue of the Conference. For three days from July 1 to 3, 2001. St.Thomas Day on July 3^d.

Paul P.Paramby, Associate Editor, Kerala Express. Fokana Conference of July 2002 in Chicago.

CHAPTER 3 Washington, DC *pages 43-63*

George A Daniel driving me to the airport on 19th June. Assyrian translation of my book **Sermons From the Gospels Vol 1 and 11** by Fr.Diodorus Muhattash. Diabetic Meal. An Obese nation. Delay in the airports.

Mathew Chakola, Visit of 1977 with Deacon Dr.Chacko and Dr.Dorothy. Mathew's ideas about church administration. Maryland Paper Company. War of Independence at Antietam near Washington DC. Cosmic Ovungal and Susan. Baltimore. The Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Dr. Jonathan Sanford. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo. An Assyrian living in Atherton, California. Late Congressman Adam Benjamin Jr., Cloning.

Walk around Pentagon in May, 1992.

CHAPTER 4 Orlando, Florida *pages 64-70*

Second visit to Florida. Prof Alexander Alex and my sister Leela. Visit of Dr. Paul Lonappen Chakola , his wife Sushila and their son Paul from Dade City. A quotation from the project paper of Paul. Fr. A. M. Zakaria. Indian Orthodox service on 24th June. Sermon with Jokes.

Fr. C. O. Vargis, my class mate in New York and now priest of the Indian Orthodox Church in Houston, Texas. Rev. K. T. Alexander and his wife Dr. Ely Alexander, Friends of the Indian President Sri K.R. Narayanan.

Holy Land Experience. Joe Mookken and Brianna. my sister's granddaughter. Visited Disney Market Place along with Brianna and her grandparents Leela and Alex.

Brianna was proud to hear that she is the eldest of the ten great grand children of my mother. My parents, both deceased, have ten children, twenty grand children and ten great grand children. All are alive. The number of the great grand children will increase, as ten of my nieces and nephews are yet to marry. Two are teenagers.

CHAPTER 5 Dallas, Texas *pages 71-89*

Flight from Orlando to Dallas was via Chicago. It was not a direct flight. Perhaps the United Airlines did not have a direct flight. Economy Plus. Extra Legroom.. Dallas Fort worth International airport. Dr. K.P Yohannan and **Gospel for Asia** in Carrollton, near Dallas. Sharing in the morning worship of the staff of **GFA**. **The**

Belivers Church. Activities of the GFA

Literature Production and distribution. Books of Dr. K. P. Yohannan in English and Malayalam.

Mathew Chakola (Viji), son of Prof. C. J. George of Ernakulam. The visit to the **Biblical Arts Centre**. Miracle at Pentecost. 124 feet wide and 20 feet tall. Artist Forger Thompson made the mural. Short visit with George Chempittra, husband of my niece Maya in whose home I stayed during my last visit to Dallas.

Visit to Raphael and Sindhu Thottan. K.T.Anthony. Deacon N.A.Timothy.

Billionaires. List from the **Forbes** magazine of July 9, 2001. Bill Gates of the Microsoft is the richest worth US \$ 58.7 billions. Maharashi. Famous Baptists. Cholesterol.

CHAPTER 6 Indianapolis *pages 90- 101*

June 30th from Dallas to Chicago. Asha and Paul Furlow. Lalitha and David Oommen . Drive from Chicago airport to Indianapolis. House of my nephew Dr.Saje Alex and Dr. Sonia . My brother Addison came from Atlanta, Georgia. Telephone conversation with Dr. Sunil James, husband of Archana, daughter of my friends Wing Commander Zacharia Kuruvilla and Sara.

Robomower machine to mow your garden. Blessing the house of Josemon Chakola and Dhanashree. Ronnel. Suresh. Dinner at Indian Restaurant. 2nd July flying from Indianapolis to Chicago. Immediately flying from Chicago to London and on to New Delhi. Offer of \$ 1000 to be offloaded at London to accommodate the overbooked passengers. Arrival in Delhi after the midnight of July 3rd. Baggage of some passengers missing. My baggage was delivered at Cochin airport after a few days. I had lost my Accu Check blood sugar monitor. Reception at Cochin Airport upon my arrival on the morning of the July 4th.

AFTERMATH OF SEPTEMBER 11

Tragedy of Sept 11. Nearly 6000 died and 6000 injured. Pentagon in Washington D.C., and WTC building in New York. Decline in passenger traffic. United Airlines closed their office in India. History and size of the Pentagon building. People scared of air travel. Major crashes in the last 20 years. Crash of an American Airlines flight on November 12, 2001 after take-off at Kennedy airport.

PHOTOGRAPHS *pages 105-112*

FOREWORD

India To Indiana is the 57th book of this prolific author-Metropolitan from Trichur. His books present an extra ordinary variety of subjects — biographies, travelogues, theological explorations, Bible interpretations, devotional songs, glimpses of church history; and to think of the most popular of Dr. Mar Aprem's writings, there are his books of jokes with such attractive titles as "Bishop's Jokes", "Laugh with the Bishop", "Holy Humour" and "Holy Smile".

The present book is an account of the author's visit to the U.S.A. in June-July 2001. He had made this trip to attend the Holy Synod of the Church of the East that met in Chicago. What strikes a careful reader of this book most is that the author had adroitly avoided pegging his attention to a mere conventional description of the places he had occasion to see during this one-month-long visit.

The keen-eyed observer in this writer - Metropolitan believes that he must see things intelligently and let his mind have a free play on them so that he can form true impressions and make thought-provoking observations. The traveller in this widely travelled Metropolitan looks at the spectacle of life with open-eyed curiosity and open-minded enthusiasm, attitudes which have gifted him the qualities of a good travelling companion. More important, they sharpen his awareness of what happens in the other parts of the globe and to create in him an emotional pressure and compulsion to integrate the impressions formed by that consciousness into the fabric of his descriptions.

This integrated consciousness, which is one of the most unmistakable marks of Dr.Mar Aprem's style of writing, is reflected in almost every chapter of this book. Even in the author's Preface the reader can hear the voice of his mellowed perception—where for example, he writes admiringly of R.K.Narayan's contributions to Indian writings in English

and quotes from President K.R.Narayanan's brilliant evaluation of R.K.s greatness as an Indo-Anglian writer

Dr.Mar Aprem exhibits exceptional skills in selecting and projecting details, which, besides making his descriptions matter – of— fact and entertaining, open up new horizons and present new discussions. The chapter on the Holy Synod (one) illustrates the author's fidelity to significant details as well as the effortless ease with which he presents them. Most of these carefully chosen details funnel out useful information in a delightful manner, as very often, they lead to interesting observations and intelligent conclusions. Thus, the author's thoughts about the difficulty which this church experiences in finding qualified candidate for episcopacy lead him to make a sensible suggestion as a solution to revive the monastic system in the Church, which can give it qualified celibate priest to be chosen for episcopacy.

The author didn't visit the Arlington National Cemetery during this trip. He had seen it in 1977. But, his irrepressible hurry to share his information with his readers makes him reel out useful statistics about Arlington. We have his interesting resume in Chapter 3 'Aftermath of September 11', which is a painful reminder of dastardly terrorist attack on the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre and leads to a list of the major plane crashes which occurred in the last twenty years. The Pentagon building, which is the biggest office building in the world covers an area of 29 acres. And when Dr.Mar Aprem presents more details of the huge building complex, the reader's curiosity is both gently aroused and comfortably pleased (chapter 6).

Chapter 5 gives us a very entertaining account of the author's flight to Dallas. The queues at the public telephone booths at the Chicago airport were thin, very thin, because more and more people were using their own cell phones. This is one of the many instances, which proclaim not only the minuteness, but the exactness of Dr.Mar Aprem's observation. **India To Indiana** also illustrates the author's graceful way

of introducing persons and describing places. We have really unforgettable thumb-nail sketches in each of the six chapters of the book, and the manner of presentation gives the readers the pleasure of seeing the things an author saw in the States, not through his eyes, but through their own.

The author's ecumenical spirit is visible in his description in chapter two of this book. He went to congratulate Mar Jacob Angadiath, the first bishop of the Syro-Malabar church outside India. His headquarters is in Chicago.

The twin virtues of brevity and simplicity have made this book a nice tool of what may be called the integral perspective of a keen-eyed observer. **India To Indiana** does have a charming felicity of expression that alternates between the humorous and the serious, but never between the tawdry and the pompous. Brevity brings beauty; simplicity creates clarity, and these two virtues have invested the book with a pleasing, convincing positiveness. Dr. Mar Aprem's sentences are small, not long or labyrinthine, and his words simple, and these small, simple words and these small, simple sentences create a wonderful, beautiful world of effect. Manifestly, the author's purpose is not to confound the reader but to communicate with him in an easy, intimate manner.

Be it a small event of limited local importance or a big event of national or international import, Dr. Mar Aprem's manner of looking at it reveals a dimension which many are sure to miss. Small wonder; his manner is inspired by the keenness and earnestness with which he observes and understands and by the objectivity and detachment with which he interprets and analyses. **India to Indiana** bears eloquent testimony to this skill in the art of writing.

Archbishop's House
Thrisuur - 5

Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy
Archbishop of Thrissur
Syro Malabar Church

PREFACE

INDIA TO INDIANA is a brief account of my visit to the USA from June 2nd to July 2nd 2001. In recent years I have been clubbing two or three tours in one book. My last book combined five tours of the year 2000. Under the pressure of various responsibilities I felt compelled to wait till October in order to include the proposed Italian visit in this book. That trip was cancelled due to my ill-health. As I promised my many friends in the USA that I was writing a account of this trip I decided to be done with it before enquiries started coming.

This is another attempt from me to write in a foreign tongue. Every time I write a new book I ask myself whether I should write in my mother tongue so that many in Kerala can read and get information about our Church abroad. I am also aware of my limitations when I write in English. Ever since I wrote my first travelogue **AMERICA REVISITED** I have been evaluating in my mind the pros and cons of writing in a foreign tongue. Finally I am tempted to write in English as more people can enjoy what I write. Moreover Indians do write in English. One such writer who proved his felicity in English passed away a few days before I undertook the present trip to the USA.

K.R. Narayanan, President of India, wrote about R.K. Narayan, on May 13, 2001 when the well-known Indo Anglian writer died in his ripe old age at 95. Narayan was better known than Narayanan, during my college days. Narayan was a *Padma Bhushan* as well as a nominated member in the *Rajya Sabha*, the Upper House of the Indian Parliament.

“English, in his hands, became an Indian language liberating itself to find its tongue in a de-colonised cultural space.” “With his lucid and graceful style, peppered with graceful humour and gentle irony

and a string of characters living simultaneously in the past and the present, Narayan's novels made a profound impact on the literary scene of the country and made him an Indian writer with universal appeal," the Indian President said.

Prof. Narayan, a wizard of pen, had also a commitment to the future of the nation. "His eloquent intervention in Parliament on the burden that children carried to school in the name of learning, is still remembered by the nation," he recalled.

Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee, prior to his departure to Malaysia in a message described Prof. Narayan, who died at Chennai early that morning, as a "traditional teller of tales", who shot into international fame through his first novel **Swami And His Friends** (1935), where the fictional town of Malgudi surfaced.

The Prime Minister recalled that Malgudi had become a landmark in India's literary history, and the famed writer further explored it in his subsequent novels.

The characters he created were humble individuals who were neither very rich nor very poor. His style was graceful, marked by genial humour, elegance and simplicity", Prime Minister Vajpayee said.

After poet Rabindra Nath Tagore got the Nobel Prize for literature nearly a century ago no Indian received that coveted recognition.

This year a writer of Indian origin V.S.Naipaul was given the Nobel Prize for literature. His grandfather was an Indian. When he was given this precious prize the Swedish Academy described him as "a literary circum-navigator, only ever really at home in himself, in his inimitable voice. Singularly unaffected by literary fashion and models he has wrought existing genres into a style of his own, in which the customary distinctions between fiction and non-fiction are of subordinate importance."

The approval of Nobel Laureate Sir V.S. Naipaul regarding travelogues is clear in his following statement

“ India is for me a difficult country. Isn't my home and cannot be my home; and yet I cannot reject it or be indifferent to it. I cannot travel only for the sights. I am at once too close and too far...”

A reporter asked Mr. C. Dinaker, former Director General of Police of Karnataka, about the possible date of the publication of the book he was writing. Mr. Dinaker replied:

“As you know, with regards to human efforts there cannot be a time frame. Perhaps, only in marriage, one can have a child after nine months.”

Timothy McVeigh

The most important news for which the Americans spent the valuable time watching TV was the execution of Timothy McVeigh. The Oklahoma City bomber was executed on Monday June 11 by lethal injection. This was the first execution in recent years.

Another important news was the drinking of the twin daughters of President George Bush, — Barbara and Jenna. They were only 19 years old, two years short for the age required for buying liquor in Texas. India too was in the news during my stay in the US. It was the news that Mrs. Sonia Gandhi was visiting New York. Her visit to New York was on 25th June. About that visit an Indian magazine wrote in retrospect as follows: **Society**, August 2001, Mumbai, p. 42

But the moment Sonia Gandhi made her first appearance in the entry hall, protocol and patience were mercilessly shoved aside as the guests lunged towards the lady in order to reach out to her, talk to

her and shake hands with her. The pandemonium was simply too chaotic for Sonia to handle and it was no wonder that she made a hasty retreat back into the anteroom.

Oprah Winfry, the TV talk show celebrity, made news. She was to buy a mansion in Santa Barbara, California for 50 million dollars. It is a 42-acre estate. She owns a Chicago Penthouse and a 160-acre farm in Indiana.

My travelogue will help many readers and the future generations to find out an important date of some significant events in the history of our Church. I was struggling to find out the number of visits I made to Washington D.C.

I remember my first event in September 1968 to go to Iraq, the second one in 1977, the third one in 1992 and I was not sure of a fourth visit. Then I remember that there was a visit to Washington D.C when I visited the Catholic University of America. Was it in 1994 or 1985 or 1996?

Finally I had to read my travelogues of that period. I went through the book **Salzburg To Boston** published in 1996. From the book I realized that it was the record of my three foreign trips in 1995. That was the first time I had to take three trips in one year. The first was in February 1995 to Vienna. The second trip was in June-July to England, U.S.A. and Canada. The third was in August to Washington, Chicago and Boston. The purpose of that trip was to read a paper in the conference of Oriental Canon Law in Boston. After ascertaining the dates of that trip in August 1995 I began to speculate the possible dates of my stay in Washington D.C.

In that travelogue I read that I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Mar Qardagh Church in Madras on Sunday 13 August. On the following

Sunday that was 20 August I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Mar Odisho Church in Chicago. The stay in Washington D.C. was in between these seven days. So I guess that I must have reached Washington D.C. on 14 August 1995 and left for Chicago on Friday 18 August. In the light of the struggle I had faced in order to find out this date, I decided to record all relevant dates in my travelogue in future. Since I do not keep a daily diary, the dates in the travelogues will be of immense help.

I am grateful to those who assisted me in having this book printed with fewer mistakes. It is not easy to produce perfect books at my speed along with my multifarious responsibilities. Yet I hesitate to slowdown. It is not a perfect book as my friend Revd. Valsan Thampu had desired it to be. When he expressed such a desire in the foreword to my last book **Austria To Australia** I made up my mind to do it. I think I am on the way to realizing that wish.

My gratitude goes to Fr. C. D. Polly, Manager of Mar Narsai Press, Thrissur who helped to get this book printed within 7 months after this trip. Special mention must be made of Prof. K. A. Ignatius, retired Professor of English in my *alma mater* St. Thomas College, Trichur, one of the prestigious institutions of higher learning in my hometown

Archbishop Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy of the Syro-Malabar Church in Trichur added to the value of this travelogue by writing a fitting Foreword. He is a busy archbishop being one of the Vice Presidents of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (C. B. C. I) and the Chairman of the CARITAS, in addition to being the head of one of the largest archdioceses in India

Thrissur, Kerala, India
2 February 2002

Mar Aprem

Chapter I

CHICAGO SYNOD

This is the 8th Holy Synod after His Holiness Mar Khanania Dinkha IV became Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East and of the Assyrians in October 1976 in Ealing near London, England.

This is the third Holy Synod I am attending. The two earlier ones I attended were in Chicago. That was in 1997 and 1999. To keep the record straight I must mention that I was a Metropolitan when Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV held the first five Holy Synods from 1976 till 1994. During that period I was with the old Calendar and Patriarch Mar Addai II had convened two Holy Synods during that period. The first one was in 1984 and the second in 1990. Both were held in Baghdad. I was present at both along with Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse who expired on 24 March 1998.

I cannot easily recall the number of times I have visited Chicago. The first visit to Chicago was in 1967 and the second was in 1977. The third was in 1984. Afterwards I made about half a dozen visits to this city where I have many friends.

In addition to the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV who presided over all the sessions of the Synod three archbishops and six bishops attended the Holy Synod. Mar Timotheus Metropolitan who is the oldest of our prelates could not travel out of India to attend the Holy Synod. As a matter of fact he could not travel abroad after the Holy Synod of Sydney, Australia in 1994. Two bishops from Iraq did not attend. Bishop Mar Yosip Sargis of Baghdad was absent in the previous Holy Synod held in Chicago in 1999. This time too he found it inconvenient to come.

Bishop Mar Yosip Isaac could not attend the Holy Synod. He was present in the previous Holy Synod in 1999 for being interviewed. He was consecrated in October 1999 to be bishop of Nuhadra (Dohuk) in Northern Iraq. He has the charge of Russia, as he was the priest in Moscow for some years. Bishop Isaac is over 40 years of age. He could not get his American visa in time. As he had served in the Iraq army, the American embassy in Amman, Jordan needed clearance from Pentagon, Washington, DC.

Bishop Mar Isaac was able to arrive in Canada on the day following the end of the Holy Synod . Afterwards he was able to come from Canada to the USA before he returned to Iraq. Mar Isaac is the last consecrated bishop of our Church. But he is not the youngest; he is older than two other bishops, Bishop Mar Odisho Oraham of Sweden and Bishop Mar Aprim Athneil of Syria who is the youngest. The Holy Synod held in Sydney, Australia in 1994 decided that priests below 30 years of age couldn't be elected to the Episcopal ranks.

Of the twelve prelates we have at present six were consecrated before they completed the age of 30 and six were consecrated after they completed the age of 30. The six prelates who were consecrated before the age of 30 are

1. Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, on 11 February 1962 was consecrated Episcopa in Teheran, by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun who was assassinated on 6 November 1975 in San Jose, California, USA.
2. Mar Narsai de Baz, Metropolitan, Lebanon, Syria and Europe was consecrated Episcopa on July 28, 1968 in Beirut (along with Mar Yohannan Avraham, bishop of Syria who died on April 14, 1985) by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun.
3. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of India consecrated on 21 September

as Episcopa and on 29 September as Metropolitan, 1968 in Baghdad, by Mar Thoma Darmo Metropolitan (of old calendar), who died in Baghdad on 7 September 1969.

4. Mar Yosip Sargis, Bishop in Baghdad on March 2, 1968 in Baghdad by Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan who died in Baghdad in July 1977.
5. Mar Aprim Khamis of Arizona on March 2, 1973 in Baghdad (along with Mar Yaqob Daniel who is not functioning on account of ill-health.) by Mar Yosip Khananisho Metropolitan.
6. Mar Meelis Zaia of Australia on October 14, 1984 in Chicago by Catholicos Patriarch by Mar Dinkha IV.

In the above list Mar Yosip Sargis of Jelu was only a teen ager when he was consecrated a bishop in 1968. He was selected from the Episcopal family of the Jelu tribe. His consecration was the end of the hereditary succession in the Episcopal families. That was also the end of the system of bishops on tribal basis.

The six who were consecrated after they completed 30 years of age are

1. Mar Gewargis Sliwa of Iraq on June 14, 1981 in Chicago as Episcopa and Metropolitan by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.
2. Mar Bawai Soro of Seattle and Northern California on October 14, 1984 in Chicago by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV
3. Mar Emmanuel Rehana, Bishop of Canada on June 3, 1990 in Chicago by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.
4. Mar Odisho Oraham of Sweden on July 24, 1994 in Sydney by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.
5. Mar Aprim Athneil of Syria on October 11, 1999 at Hassake,

Syria by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and

6. Mar Yosip Isaac of Nuhadra (Dohuk), Iraq and Russia on October 25, 1999 in Baghdad, Iraq by Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV.

The Holy Synod of Australia of 1994 also demanded that the candidates for episcopacy should have at least a Masters degree. I think that is also a wise decision. Even ordinary priests and deacons are acquiring Master's degree. The prelates should possess some higher academic qualification. In most of the churches there are enough priests with these qualifications to be selected for episcopacy.

Our church has the problem that episcopacy has to be celibate. If all the priests were celibates as in the Roman Catholic Church then there is no problem to find qualified candidates. As our priests are allowed to marry some of our qualified priests cannot be considered for episcopacy. In the Protestant church there is no problem as bishops can be selected from married priests too.

One solution for this problem is to encourage monasteries so that there will be educated celibate priests to be chosen for the episcopacy. In the Roman Catholic Church both the monastic priests as well as secular priests are selected for episcopacy. In that Church both secular priests and the monastic priests are celibates. Usually the monastic priests do not have the pastoral experience of the secular priests. In Kerala state the Cardinal is from the monastic order of the Redemptorists. The majority of the bishops is from the secular ranks.

During the Holy Synod I was in the company of the two young bishops. I noticed that both are interesting persons. When Bishop Aprim Athneil was born I was already a priest. Bishop Aprim was

staying in the house of the Chairman of the Church Council Mr.Kando S.Mako. Emily, wife of Mr. Kando was a relative of the bishop. Bishop could crack jokes without any effort. He has a rare talent to imitate people.

Bishop Odisho Oraham was staying in the same guesthouse where I was staying namely **Homestead Village Guest Studios** in Schaumburg closer to the Mart Mariam Church in Rosalle where the Holy Synod was being held. Every morning Kando Mako would pick both of us and take to his home. After breakfast with Bishop Aprim Athneil who was staying there we reached the venue of the meeting before time. We were asked to stay in this Guest House in order to avoid inconvenience to the Assyrian families.

There was a proposal two years ago to build a headquarters in the Mart Mariam Church in Rosalle with a dozen guest rooms for the bishops to stay when they attend the Holy Synod. This idea was dropped not only owing to the lack of funds but also for the reason that we will not need it often. The Holy Synod may meet once in three or four years and that too may be in Australia or Iraq or some other place. It is a good idea to hold Holy Synods in different parts of our Universal Church.

It was an interesting experience to attend the Holy Synod. I was the only non-Assyrian. Therefore I was not fully following all that was going on. His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV the Catholicos Patriarch was always giving one bishop the duty to interpret for me. Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia was doing it first. As he is the Secretary of the Holy Synod, responsible for writing the minutes of the meetings, that duty was assigned to another bishop. This bishop Mar Odisho Oraham is the Bishop of Europe with his headquarters in Sweden. Since he had his theological training in a seminary in England he is fluent in English. The main decisions are :

1. The administration of the diocese of Western USA is taken over by the Patriarch for a period of one and a half year.
2. A church will be built in Seleucia-Ctesiphon near Baghdad, Iraq to be known as the Patriarchal Throne of Kokhe.
3. Fifty Days Fast. Sundays in Lent are also days of abstinence from meat. Total fasting is not required on Sundays.
4. When *Maranaya* festivals and Memorials fall on Wednesdays and Fridays, meat can be eaten only after the evening.
5. All clergy can take leave only for three weeks a year.
6. When members move from a parish or diocese they have to get a transfer letter from the previous parish or diocese.
7. His Lordship Mar Meelis Zaia and Archdeacon Yonan Youvel Yonan are authorized to make a translation of the liturgy from Aramaic to modern Assyrian to be used in the church regularly.
8. If there is a necessity to have evening Qurbana for Memorials or feasts, on days other than Sundays, the bishop of the diocese can give permission.
9. On our brethren in the old calendar the committees of both sides should meet and work for full unity.
10. The Assyrian Church of the East should continue the dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church (Vatican), the Chaldean Church and the Orthodox Churches.
11. The Church of the East has seven sacraments.
 1. Priesthood,
 2. Holy Baptism,
 3. the Oil of anointing,
 4. *Qurbana* of the body and blood of Christ.
 5. Forgiveness of sins,

6. Holy Leaven or *Malka*,
7. Sign of the (life- giving) Cross.

This has been stated by Mar Abdisho d' Suva (died 1318) in **Marganita**. He had written it by the command of the Patriarch.

12. The Church of the East in the past had many churches and monasteries in the East like China, Japan etc. The Holy Synod of the Church of the East and of the Assyrians is proud of this heritage and wishes to revive this tradition.

The Church Committee under the direction of the Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, who is driven from his residence in Morton Grove to Rosalle ahead of the scheduled time, made the arrangements for the 8th Holy Synod. The bishops who were residing in different places also used to arrive ahead of time. The ladies of the Church were already in the kitchen preparing coffee and refreshments, lunch etc.

Mrs. Emily Mako, wife of Kando S.Mako, President of the Church Committee, as well as Maryam, daughter of the late archdeacon Kaku Lazar and others worked hard all those days. They knew who were diabetic and served food according to the need, sometimes even according to the greed. They recommended some fruits and Assyrian sweets were good. Sometimes I fell into temptation thinking that I would increase the dose of my insulin for that particular day.

Fr. Khoshaba Bouza, priest of the Mart Mariam parish in Rosalle, was always available to help us. I wrote my monthly message for **Voice of the East** in Malayalam due to be published on 15th of every month. I wrote a report in Malayalam that the Holy Synod had begun its deliberations etc in Rosalle. I wanted to send it by Fax to Trichur. Qasha Bouza opened his office and tried to send it. As he was not

aware of the code number for India the Fax was not going. Although I did not have any experience of sending Fax messages we had some difficulty in sending. I learned something from him and I used my own ideas and we were able to send it.

On two Sundays June 3 and 10, I attended the Qurbana in Mart Mariam Church, Roselle. On 10th June Mar Bawai Soro celebrated. He asked me whether I would like to share in the distribution of the Holy Bread, which I gladly did. After Qurbana Deacon Pithyon introduced himself to me. He is the second son of my Syriac Malpan Deacon Kaku Lazar who later became priest and archdeacon. I told him that I had met him in Baghdad when I visited my Malpan in 1962 when he was priest in the Mar Zaia Cathedral in Karradat Maryam in Baghdad. Then I met his mother Julia, first cousin of Zaya d Malik Ishmael (son of Malik Yacob) who is a deputy in the Parliament of Syria since many years. Mr. Zaya was a deputy when I first met him in Syria in 1962 and later in 1996.

After the Qurbana we had breakfast in the hall. Benyamin Yalda who was the Chairman of the Council the previous time greeted me, saying, "my friend". I had e-mail communication with him about the directory of the Church which he was compiling. I met Sargon Aboona who was enquiring whether my books will be available in the church bookstore. I am glad that there are some Assyrians who read and speak English well. I have seen the photo of both Sargon Aboona and Ben Yalda in NINEVEH magazine of the Fourth Quarter of the year 2000. That was the group photo taken in Sydney on the occasion of the Habbaniya Union School Fourth Reunion held in Sydney on 21 October 2000

Then I met a family who began to talk with me. The father of the family said that he is the brother of Deacon Emad Sulaqa whose house I had visited in Melbourne, Australia in July last year.

- It sounds strange that I do not know how to send a fax. I do not know how to use a Mobile phone. I do not know how to put a video in a VCR. Small children know it. I do not use it. I do not drive a car. I may never learn it. I do not think that I am too old not to learn. During my summer vacation in Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, USA I was told of the job of house sitting. That is to live and take care of the house when the owner is away on vacation. Considering that I can save the rent in the seminary hostel during the summer vacation I made telephone enquiry. The owner asked whether I had a car. I said “no”. He was considerate. He said, “Don’t worry, I am leaving a car in the house. Do you have a license?” How can I have a license, as I do not know to drive?

As planned earlier Santhosh J. Nadakavukaren, son of N. I. Joseph of our parish in Trivandrum, capital of Kerala, had come for Qurbana. He is a member of our church in India. Our church members from India find it very difficult to attend an Assyrian service where they do not understand anything. Even after the service most of the people speak only Assyrian language. Nevertheless when I celebrate in America they come and they are happy that they understand at least the sermon from the Gospel that I preach in English. Santhosh took me to his apartment at Downers Grove, Illinois 60516, which is near Chicago.

I had gone there nearly two years earlier when his wife Sumathi P.Kammath was expecting a baby. Now the baby was there. It took some time for the baby to smile at a bearded stranger. Sumathi belonged to a Hindu family. They are computer engineers. She was baptized in our church in Trichur and I solemnized their wedding in our Mar Yohannan Mamdhana Church, Trichur in 1996. She is a God-fearing lady. Inter-religious marriages are taking place in India more often than before. Most educated people do not have any prejudice against religion. The Roman Catholics, I am told, permit

a non- Christian man to marry a Roman Catholic girl in the church, on the condition that she will raise the children of their marriage in the Roman Catholic faith. Our church does not permit it. We insist that the non- Christian partner has to be baptized before a Christian marriage ceremony is performed for the couple.

Graduation

It was my privilege to speak at the 7th annual graduation ceremony. I had attended the 3rd graduation ceremony in Chicago in June 1997 along with the late Bishop Poulouse Mar Poulouse. We both were new to many of the Assyrians present there. At that time it was the first Holy Synod for both of us. Somebody in the welcome speech mentioned that Mar Aprem and Mar Poulouse from India were present at that meeting. As we both couldn't understand the Assyrian spoken language we sat there as ignorant people. As we were not able to follow the words spoken there most of them must have thought that we had no academic degrees. One of the Assyrians asked me, "Mar Aprem, do you have a Master's degree?" I replied, "Yes, I have Master degrees from India and from America too. We two had doctorates too." I think she was embarrassed. She said, "Good for you".

This time I had submitted my dissertation for the second doctorate on 31 October 2000 to Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam, Kerala through St.Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute known as SEERI in Kottayam. Although the results are not known yet, I thought that organizers were going to ask me to sit with the recipients. Instead they asked me to be the speaker, as the bishop who was scheduled to be on the programme was out of station. Afterwards I too was given a medal, which all graduates received.

The seventh annual graduation ceremony was held on Sunday 17th June 2001 in the Hanging Gardens in 8301 W. Belmont, River Grove,

Illinois, 60171, USA. This is the banquet hall where most of the important Assyrian functions are held. It is owned and operated by the Assyrians. It is not a church property.

His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East, presided over the function and congratulated the graduates of the Church of the East. It was my privilege to encourage the youngsters on the occasion. The Catholicos Patriarch encouraged the young generation of our Church to be closer to God and to the Church. His Holiness personally greeted each graduate and presented the mementos.

I tried to be humorous, as some Assyrians by this time have come to know that that I had written some joke books. I narrated the story of a boy who loved his pet dog whose name was Paddington. He called him Paddy to be brief. He used to play with Paddy before he went to school. In the afternoons he rushed to play with Paddy as soon as he returned from the school.

One day this Paddy was run over by a car. As the dead body was lying in the garden the mother was worried that her son would be violent when he would hear about the death of Paddy. The caring mother prepared sweets for the boy as soon as he returned from the school. The mother gave him tea and sweets and told him that Paddy was killed in a car accident when he was in school. The boy did not cry. He said, "Okay."

He went to play with Paddy. He saw the dead body of his buddy. He came back crying. Mother comforted him saying, "Did not I tell you that your Paddy was killed. You didn't cry at that time. Then why do you cry now?" The boy replied, "Mummy, when you told me the sad news I thought it was Daddy who was killed. I was relieved to hear that. But now I know that it was my Paddy, my bosom buddy, who

was killed. How can I hear such sad news?” I told the youngsters to love their Daddies more than their Paddies. The audience who understood English roared in laughter. Some laughed late, as they did not understand English properly.

These youngsters have not witnessed the sufferings that their parents and grandparents had to go through after the First World War (1914-18) when they were driven away from the homelands. At the same time these youngsters have got good education. Some of them received M.D. in Surgery and Medicine or Masters or Bachelor's degree in Computer Science or Business Management. One had a doctorate in Pharmacy. Some of these were in honour roll. In future these Assyrians will play an important role in the Church and society.

Many of them are willing to be involved in the life of the Church. But some of them do not find their peers or friends in the church circles. On the other hand the Church cannot ignore them. We have to bring them in and make them feel at home. The Church is not for the old people alone. We need both the old and the young. Let us pray that these new graduates will prove to be an asset to our Church.

Their talents are needed for the Church to serve them and their relatives in an efficient manner. I have heard some youngsters blaming that the church is not doing its responsibility towards youth. I have asked some of them to think about becoming priests and deacons to serve our church in a manner they would like our priests to do. They themselves can become priests and leaders of our church. The church means all of us. Let us make it our own by sharing its burden and shaping a better future.

John Nimrod, former Senator of the State of Illinois, was present at the function. He is the General Secretary of the Assyrian Universal

Alliance. He is well known in the Assyrian circles all over the world. As soon as he came in he announced to the Patriarch “ I have become a great grandfather“. That means his son became a grandfather or his daughter became a grandmother. I think he is 79 years old.

Mr. Sheba Mando, President of the Assyrian National Council of Illinois, was present at the function. Mr. Robert Mulhim, President of the Assyrian Academic Society was the Guest Speaker. Several senior friends were there. Parents of the graduates were also there. Mrs. Tina Yousif, Chairperson of the Committee, was known to me in my previous visits.

Mr. William Michael, translator of my book on the Fathers of the Church of the East into Arabic was there. He is also the Arabic editor of our Church website www.cired.org. I could not recognize him. When we meet many people in several parts of this planet earth, it is difficult to remember the faces of all of them. I need some special chip to store everything in my memory.

When I visited the Patriarchate in Morton Grove, I was happy to see the lavishly illustrated book **Southern Silk Road** (White Orchid Books, Bangkok, 2000) written by Dr. Christoph Baumer. He had presented the same book to me a few months earlier. I had given him the Patriarch's address. The following e-mail sent by him details his plan for writing another scholarly book about our Church.

Dear Father Mar Aprem,

Thank you very much for sending me your latest book
“**Austria to Australia**” which I enjoy very much.

I'm currently finishing my manuscript on Eastern Tibet and another book in German on the Silk Road.

My project on the Church of the East is proceeding well. I was in April in Eastern Turkey and in June in Chicago where I met H.H.Mar Dinkha IV. I had the honour to have a two hours audience with him. I'll now go in September to Mongolia where the Church was once strong and then in October/November to Urmiah in northwestern Iran. I hope to go next year to Irak. Then I'll have a lot of picture material. I plan to have my book published by 2003. I hope you are feeling well and have enough time to recover from all your travels.

With all my best personal wishes,
In the Faith of Christ

Yours

*Christoph

If we don't write about our Church, others will write. There is no use of blaming them for not writing exactly the way we wished it to be written.

Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage get-together

On Saturday 16th June the alumni of Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage met in Chicago. John and Anne were with their parents, Eleanor and Paul Tomasula. Polly Reuling came from Waterloo, Iowa with her two girls namely Unny Mary and Alice. Mary had graduated from Macalester College with a Bachelor of Arts degree on Sunday May 20th, 2001 with a double major in environmental Science and geography with a minor in geology. She started working in St. Paul, Minnesota at the land management information Centre under Minnesota Planning. She had been writing lesson plans about environmental issues for elementary and high schools.

Unny Mary was the first foreign adoption from the Mar Timotheus

Memorial Orphanage, Trichur. Now she graduated with a degree. My mother would have been hilarious to hear that. Now more will graduate and will be placed in good position. Alice is equally bright.

Reena is a bright girl adopted by Dr. Primal de Lenorolle and his wife Sandy. Reena is the last adoption from the M.T.M. Orphanage. Mrs. J.D. Mookken had to go to the American Consulate in Madras, now known as Chennai. As the parents who adopted Reena had not arrived in India to escort the baby girl it was not easy to get the visa for the baby. The sister or the mother of one of the students of Dr. Primal was to escort the baby to Chicago from India. Although my mother did not know English she convinced the visa officials in the American Consulate in Madras. Actually they were about to refuse the request for the visa.

At the right moment a telephone call came to the Consulate from America. That message changed the mind of the officials. My mother said later when the telephone call came the officials began to treat my mother like a VIP. They immediately issued the visa. My mother had to take the baby to Bangalore to deliver the baby to the lady in Bangalore. This was the first time she had to go and deliver the baby. Usually the parents who adopt come and pick up. I guess that Reena will earn many degrees like her father Dr. Primal de Lenorolle who is a University Professor in Chicago. He is from Sri Lanka and his wife is an American. While Tomasulas and Reuling had two babies to take care of, Primal and Sandy have one baby to take care. So I guess Reena gets double attention.

There is one more girl in Chicago area. Her name is Kala. Margaret is her another name. She could not come for the get together as her father had to undergo special treatment that week. I had met her some years ago in Chicago. Her parents had adopted two other children from an Orphanage in Bangalore or Calcutta.

During the evening of Saturday June 16th we had the get together in the restaurant called **Americana** in Schaumburg . They chose the place in order to be closer to the place where I was staying. Everybody was asked to order what they wanted to eat. Since I had given up eating meat after I had become a bishop in 1968 they suggested for me some vegetarian dishes. Some of them also chose vegetarian dishes. When it came to the dessert everybody was choosing ice cream etc. Since I am a diabetic I skipped dessert. Reena had ordered a large cup of ice cream with chocolate. She learned that she could not gulp the whole stuff. Finally she asked other children to help her finish it. Then she asked the grown ups also to help her to finish it. Some times Americans as well as Indians eat more than what is necessary.

It was a pleasant evening. Two years ago when I visited Chicago I telephoned to some of them. There was no time to meet them. All were glad that we met this time. Reena's parents offered to take me to the house of Juliet Kasha where I was supposed to stay that evening. Two years ago they had done the same. So I thought they would know the house. I had forgotten the directions. Finally we made it. I was so sleepy exhausted by the programmes of that day.

When I reached the house of Juliet Kasha, she told me that Patriarch Mar Dinkha had called me. I called him back. His Holiness asked me to be ready to make a speech the next day for the Assyrian graduates in the Hanging Gardens. I replied that I would be happy to do it. Then His Holiness said that I had to speak very slow. I promised to remember his advice. But the next day when I spoke I could not control the speed, as I have to say so many things in just ten minutes.

The next day Mrs. Juliet Kasha in Lincolnwood drove me to Mar Gewargese Church in North Ashland Avenue to celebrate Holy Qurbana. Juliet is a High school teacher and a talented poet who

has written many poems and songs in Assyrian. Her sister is the leader of the Church Choir in the Cathedral. I appreciated the opportunity to stay with her because of my interest in music. If I had time I would have composed some songs in the Assyrian language as well as in English.

Rabbi Shoura Michalian telephoned to Juliet from Sydney, Australia. I told Juliet that I knew Rabbi Shoura in California when I spoke at the Mesopotamia Light Seminar. I told her that I have written an appreciation of his musical talents in my book **Austria to Australia**. I had mentioned that I appreciated the singing of my song **Behold the Cross of Calvary** by the Assyrian Choir of Sydney in June 2000 when I attended the 25th anniversary of the parish in Sydney and the 15th anniversary of the administration of the Australian diocese by Bishop Mar Meelis Zaia. Juliet called Rabbi Shoura from Chicago to Sydney. We talked. Rabbi Shoura promised to send me a video tape of that event.

I expressed the hope that some Assyrian choir would sing it in the Assyrian language. Shamasha Geevarghese Benyamin of Ashitha had published the Assyrian translation of my song in his publication in Chicago. Actually I have translations into one hundred languages or dialects of this song. I had a translation into Polish. When His Holiness Pope John Paul II visited Kerala, India in February 1986 I presented him the Polish translation. The security officers in Cochin where the Pope was staying with the Latin Archbishop had hesitation to let me carry this song when I was ushered in to have audience with the Pope. Since the security police did not read Polish they took it from me to make sure that it was not a memorandum against the Catholic hierarchy in Kerala or any insult against the Pope. Later they checked with somebody and brought it to the room where we were to be presented to the Pope. The Pope read it and commented about it to his secretary. Since I did not know Polish, I did not know what Pope

thought about my poem. From the expression on his face I guessed that the comment he had made about my poem was positive.

Ramsen and Athor are two sons of Juliet. When Mar Poulose and myself stayed with Juliet during the 6th Holy Synod in Chicago in 1997 we met both of them. Now both have earned their degrees. Ramsen was still at home helping his mother. Athor was away for further training. During the first visit in 1997 Juliet's mother was staying with her. She passed away a month or two after our stay in that home.

During our stay in 1997 Juliet used to lock her dog as Mar Poulose said that he was allergic to dogs. This time I told her that she could free her dog and I pretended to be friendly with the dog. Hiding my fear inside I smiled at the big dog. I am surprised how much money the Americans spend to feed their dogs. It is definitely more than the food of the human beings.

On Sunday 17th June I celebrated Holy Qurbana in Mar Gevarghese Cathedral. In the previous years when I celebrated in this church deacon David Royal used to assist me. Now he is doing further studies in theology in Roma. He was ordained a priest along with Qasha William Toma about two years ago. Qasha Shliemon Heseqial, the parish priest was there to assist me. Cor-episcopa Haroun of Australia was there. I had met him last year, in June in Sydney. Some years ago he was a priest in Melbourne. Archdeacon Aprim de Baz and Mar Narsai Metropolitan were also there.

Qasha Shliemon told me after Qurbana that he would give me the *Majaltha*. I did not understand the word *Majaltha*. He asked me in surprise, "You don't know *majaltha*?" . Then I said, you mean magazine **Voice From the East** for which he was the editor. After all these years many Assyrians are not good in English and I am not good in the Assyrian language.

I went in front of the bookstall in the basement. From outside I could not find any of my books. I went inside and I saw some 30 copies of my book **Laugh With the Bishop** kept in the lowest portion of the shelf. Nobody seems to know what it is. The publisher, the Roman Catholic St.Paul Books, Mumbai sold more than 25 thousand copies of that book.

I saw an audio cassette for sale. It is entitled in English **Praise, O My Soul**. The name of the author is given as Rev. Samuel Dinkha whom I had met in Chicago in 1984. As there is no Assyrian word I asked the people around there whether they would know that it was in Assyrian or in English. Nobody knew. They presented me a cassette. After coming to India, I listened to the cassette. It was in Assyrian. I would suggest that they should write somewhere on the cover that it is in Assyrian. Both sides now have only English letters. At least it would be good to instruct the Bookstore staff that it is in Assyrian, although only English words are on the outside label.

My niece Asha and her husband Paul Furlow had come for the Qurbana. They were surprised to find that four or five employees of his firm **Techlighting** were there. Paul earned M.B.A. degree from the prestigious Stanford University. His father had his M.B.A. from Harvard University. I cannot claim one is better than the other. Both Stanford and Harvard are the top two universities as far as Business Administration degree is concerned. Paul with his friend as partner started **Techlighting**. They make some parts of the special lights in China, where labour is cheap. Then they assemble it in Chicago.

Americans know how to sell their products. The brochure of the **Techlighting** company contains many beautiful pictures and attractive slogans such as the following:

MonoRail offers the control and utility to satisfy any lighting designer.

Combined with a sophisticated, elegant look.

You aren't just designing with light,

You're lighting with design.

Paul and Asha had to drive to uptown New York that day. As I was celebrating they decided to drive to New York only after the Qurbana. It was occasion for me to see them, briefly though. I had celebrated their marriage on July 2, 1995 at Columbus, Ohio where my sister's family used to reside.

On Monday 18th June my old classmate Mr. T.P. Lazar came to see me with his wife Ammini. She had brought some insulin bottles for me. I told them that I was hoping to get out of insulin. For diabetic patients injecting insulin daily is a life long prescription. I was trying to break that law by using magnet therapy. That is a debatable issue in medical circles. Alternative medicines are there to relieve some patients from the pain of injections and operations.

The next day I was to leave Chicago. Juliet Kasha had to go to school to teach early. I told her that I would manage my breakfast. She had asked her son Ramsen to help me. But I went on my own to the kitchen and started helping myself with the food. I ate to my heart's content. Nobody was watching. Nobody was to warn me that I should not eat that particular thing because it has sugar or fat or oil. I was amazed by the quantity of the food stored in the refrigerators and other storage places. I do not think that Juliet and her son can consume that much food in one month. Of course their dog eats much more than I can imagine.

Chapter 2

MAR JACOB ANGADIATH

Before I went to Chicago I heard the news of the creation of a Syro-Malabar diocese for the Syrian Catholic Christians from Kerala living in USA and Canada. I contacted T.P. Lazar, my schoolmate in the Chaldean Syrian High School in Trichur living in Chicago for many years. We fixed a time for me to congratulate personally the Bishop-designate. After the Holy Synod was over I went to Bellwood.

The Mar Thoma Sleeha Church is situated at 5000 St. Charles Road, Bellwood, Illinois 60104. The Bishop-designate was happy to receive T.P. Lazar, and me, and my niece Asha Furlow. I met Mar Jacob Angadiath for the first time. He is a humble man. His choice as the Bishop of the newly created diocese was a surprise. His congregation was happy at the promotion of their parish priest as a bishop. Philip Kannookadan (Pylappan), President of the Pastoral Council, wrote an appreciation of their pastor in the news bulletin of the Church in May 2001 issue, from which are quoted the following words.

“As we can imagine, the happiness was immense for Ulahannan and Mariamma when their little boy was born on October 26th 1945. His God fearing parents did not know that their little boy was going to be a bishop, a bishop for the first Syro-Malabar diocese outside of India. God’s plans are unknown to man. Romans 8:28, “We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purposes.” Let us all join him in thanking God for all his countless blessings. Let us all pray for him that he may continue his spiritual and administrative leadership for countless years to come.

Let us all pray that our children will continue the faith based on the culture and tradition of our Syro-Malabar Church in India, especially our children who are born and brought up in this country in a culture entirely different from the one we grew up in. Let us also pray that our second generation will keep the faith that is passed on to us from generations and generations through our parents.

Our patron St. Thomas who is also known as “doubting Thomas” insisted on seeing and touching to see and touch the Lord to believe that Jesus was risen from the dead. Jesus appeared and told him faith matters, not sight. Then St. Thomas called Jesus as “My Lord and my God”. Let us hope that children will keep this faith. It was this faith that made our first generation catholic immigrants from India to start the Catholic fellowship in Loyola Church at Devon, which faced its ups and downs and now became the corner stone of the diocese of the Syro-Malabarians in America and Canada. Let us remember and thank God for all of our past spiritual leaders who made this possible.”

The consecration of the first Syro Malabar bishop outside India was a big event. Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil of Cochin and Archbishop Joseph Powathil of Changanassery gave leadership. Cardinal Francis George of Chicago also participated. That was the occasion for the Syro Malabar Christians of India in the USA to get together. More than three thousand people attended the conference in Hyatt Regency in Chicago.

The newspapers gave good coverage of the events that took place on 1 to 3 July, 2001. July 3rd is an important day for all the Syrian Christians in India, Because we believe that St. Thomas, the doubting disciple, came to evangelize India during 52 to 72 AD. July 3rd is observed as a *Dukhrana* (Memorial) of St.Thomas in the church calendar not only in India, but universally.

Paul P. Paramby is the associate Editor of the **Kerala Express** published in Chicago. The Trichur friends gave him a reception when he was elected President of the Illinois Malayalee Association. It was the first time some body from Trichur area was elected to a high post in this organization, which is usually dominated by friends from the old Travancore state. We are from the erstwhile Cochin state. Travancore state was a larger kingdom. After the independence of India the Maharajahs united with the Indian Union one by one. Thus the Travancore- Cochin state was formed. Paul P.Paramby is one of the organizers of the FOKANA conference scheduled to meet in Chicago in July 2002.

FOKANA conference is held once in two years in North America for the Kerala people. It is under the auspices of many Kerala cultural organizations. I have attended the World Malayalam conference in New Jersey in 1995. It ended in the early hours of July 4th. That evening when I flew to India from New York's JF Kennedy airport I could witness the fire works of July 4th near the Hudson River separating New York and New Jersey. I am told that FOKANA is a bigger conference; I would like to attend it once, perhaps in July 2002.

Annexing the Malayalam -speaking areas from the Madras Province the Kerala state was formed in 1956. With the reorganization as Kerala state Christians lost the second place in our state. A lot of Muslims resided in the Malabar are annexed to Travancore-Cochin state. Thus the Muslims became the number two religion in Kerala state pushing down the Christians to the third place. In India in general Christians are in the 3rd place. With only two and a half percent of the total population of India which exceeded a billion last year.

Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil was baptizing his second baby on July 4th and Paul P.Paramby wanted me to extend my return trip by two

days in order to attend the Baptism ceremony. It was not easy for me to postpone my programmes even for one day.

My programme in Chicago was very crowded. Therefore I did not get time even to telephone. I had to ask my friend T.P.Lazar to contact him on my behalf.

Chapter 3

WASHINGTON D.C.

George A. Daniel, younger brother of Deacon Dadhway, drove me to Chicago airport on Tuesday 19th June. He had driven me in April 1999 after the last Holy Synod in Chicago to the railway station to go to Detroit to obtain the visitor's visa to Canada. George Daniel is an active churchman. He loves the Church. We discussed a lot of concerns of today. Although he runs a liquor shop, he does not drink. I guess many liquor shop owners do not drink. If he starts drinking he will not have much stuff left to sell in his shop. Moreover he would not be able to stand on two legs to sell his liquor.

George, whom the Assyrians call Jaggi, has read most of my books. He is interested in the books published by the Mar Narsai Press. I have a hunch that I am not known to most of the Assyrians as a writer. Almost all my books are written in English. The only Assyrian translation available was the biography of Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan translated by Shamasha Geevarghese Benjamin of Ashitha, formerly at Mosul, Iraq and later in Chicago about a decade ago.

After my visit I got copies of the Assyrian translation of my book **SERMONS FROM THE GOSPEL**. It is in two volumes. Many Assyrian priests used to ask me for a copy of this book. Now Fr. Diodoros Muhattash from Mississauga near Toronto in Canada translated both the volumes into modern Assyrian. I hope that the Assyrian clergy and laity would take advantage of this publication.

Diabetic Meal

Throughout the journey diabetic low calcium meal was served. The

noon meal between Chicago and Dallas, Texas was a snack. The special yellow card in the snack box has my name “Mar” on it and the seat number, flight number etc with the following note.

“Meeting your needs one meal at a time

Many of our customers have unique nutritional needs. Whether you are trying to meet dietary requirements, religious guidelines, cultural preferences or just looking for a healthy change of place, we have created special meals for a whole range of needs.

To bring you the most flavorful, nutritionally balanced meals in-flight, we’ve partnered with The Culinary Institute of America and Heart Smart International. “Our special meals are designed by two of Culinary Institute of America’s top instructors, including a certified Master Chef and a registered dietician with a master’s degree in nutrition. The result? Dig in and decide for yourself.

“Your meal is Heart Smart”

“United Airlines has joined with Heart Smart International” to provide our customers with truly healthy meals. “The Heart Smart” logo designates that this meals meet all FDA guidelines for making the following nutritional health claim: “While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of this disease.” The following nutritional data has been provided by Heart Smart International.”

We have taken care to make sure your meal tastes good and is nutritious by partnering with the culinary Institutions of America and Heart Smart International. Hearth baked. It contains stone ground whole-wheat flour and malted Barley flour 1 oz (28%)’.

The New Indian Express, Kochi, dated 5 June 2001 in page 11 has interesting news about obesity.

An obese nation

Sydney: Australian children are now among the world's fattest because of lack of exercise and fried food from hamburger chains according to authors of a new study published here Monday. The country has a climate that encourages outdoor activity and which, after last year's Sydney Olympics, is able to boast it has the greatest sporting achievers on earth, has turned into a nation of fatties. The researchers believe too many Australian children have given up walking or riding to school on their bikes and have replaced sporting activity with sitting in front of TV and computer screens.

In my previous journeys sometimes our aircrafts had to wait a long time for take offs. On such occasions, the pilot would inform us that the aircraft is not getting clearance as the airport was getting ready for VIP's. Jayanthi Natarajan recalls such an occasion when she was in the delegation of Indian President K.R. Narayanan during his trip to Europe.

When we were leaving Germany, another MP got distracted talking to Pamela Anderson (of Baywatch fame) and missed the carcade. We left for the airport. And though he caught a taxi, he could not reach the airport because traffic was closed. Meanwhile, German authorities gave the *Rashtrapathy* a ceremonial send off and stood by for take off. But we were one MP short, and the President wouldn't leave without him. Things began to get iffy, because other flight movement is suspended to allow the President's flight

to leave, and we were quickly exhausting the time slot reserved for us.

Finally the Germans sent motorbike messengers to find and rescue our missing colleague who ultimately arrived escorted by ten motorbike outriders, and collapsed in a heap on the plane after tearfully apologizing to the President. He was never later after that.

Mathew Chakola (Babu) from Trichur is a successful businessman today. During my visit to the USA in May 1977 he was with Dr. Deacon C.J. Chacko and his wife *Padmashree* Dr. Dorothy Chacko. It is strange that during the 24 years in spite of my several trips to the USA I never met him. He visited me in November 1995 when the unity between two groups in our Church took place. He hurriedly advised me not to involve the laymen too much in the administration of the church. He suspects that the personality conflicts and different clicks of the laymen will be dragged into the church unnecessarily. He has a point there. The involvement of the laity in the church affairs is an important topic. In a travelogue like this there is no space for a fairer treatment of that much debated and vital issue.

It was for the cause of this unity Mathew came with Dr. Chacko and Dr. Dorothy and picked me from the railway station in New York and drove to Yonkers to discuss with Mar Aprim Khamis. During the return trip we crossed George Washington bridge twice, once in upper level and the return through the lower level. Bishop Aprim Khamis was escorting me. Mathew's car reached the destination, the house of Jos Mundassery, a friend from Trichur. We reached there late. Mathew realized that we made a wrong turn. Mathew, a young man then, looked at Dr. Chacko, older than his father, made a profound and prophetic statement, "big people make big mistakes."

During the short time in this visit he came to the topic of church administration. He suggested that I should appoint competent persons even outside the church to make proper management study and implement bold measures. Our people are used to contest election in the church. Some of them have no education and ability to manage the administration. Some people dominate the discussions in the church councils. Some come to serve as trustees and Church council members just because their fathers were in that capacity and it is his birthright to be a trustee.

Some of the businessmen know how to sell their commodities with profit. At the same time they have no idea how a church with people of various social strata can be run. Efficiency is not there. He said a management consultant, even if he is a non-Christian, could be appointed to study what are the revenues of the church. How many people pay the membership fees regularly? What are the ways and means to balance the budget? Then the bishops and the educated clergy should have the guts to implement such recommendations with innovations, if necessary.

In Mathew Chakola's address I noticed M.D. written. In India M.D. means Managing Director. In America I thought it was Madison or something. It took a long time for me to understand MD stands for Maryland. This state is close to Washington, D.C. He lives in a town called Middletown in Maryland.

Mathew gave me a conducted tour of the paper factory he built. He is a structural engineer by training in India. He became a consultant to some paper factories in the USA. He finally decided to stop advising others and starts practicing what he was preaching. Maryland Paper Company in Williamsport, MD 21795 has a success story. Mathew Chakola is the President and CEO of this paper company. Not many Indians have achieved so much in the business

field in America, a land of their adoption. In his case I should describe it as a land of adoption instead of a land of sojourn, which is the case for some Indians. Since I cannot explain the details of the working of this Company after a single visit, I asked for a simple leaflet on it. Given below is an extract from it.

MARYLAND PAPER COMPANY

Maryland paper recycling starts with the

1. Unloading of bales of used corrugated boxes, newspapers, magazines, etc – (upper right). The bales are placed on a continuous conveyor. Then the bales are fed into the hydropulper and by agitation along with addition of water the paper is disintegrated into pulp.
2. Pulp is pumped to the storage chest.
3. Then using extensive cleaning systems the pulp, which is now 2% fibre and 98% water, is pumped through the rough cones (centrifugal cleaners), which remove heavy foreign material.
4. The pulp goes to the pressure screens to remove the foreign particles
5. The pulp from the pressure screens moves to the contra cones (centrifugal cleaners), which remove any small foreign particles not removed by previous cleaners.
6. The pulp then goes to the hydro sieves, which remove water so that the pulp can be better refined.
7. It is then pumped through refiners, which brush the fibres apart allowing for a smoother, stronger sheet. The pulp is then moved to the machine chest for storage. Fresh water is blended with the pulp to a consistency of 1% fibre – 99% water and is now

- ready to be made into paper and is sent to the paper machine.
8. Through a very precise opening at the very bottom of the head box, the pulp is distributed onto a moving wire screen belt. A fibre sheet is formed as the water drains through. Water is rapidly removed by foils and vacuum and the wet sheet is then fed through the presses, which extract additional water.
 9. The dryer section consists of steam-heated steel drums, which further evaporate water from the sheet.
 10. The dried paper is wound onto a large spool or reel when it reaches the correct diameter it is taken from this machine to the rewinder.
 11. The rewinder finishes, cuts and rewinds the paper into its finished form.
 12. After banding, weighing and quality control approval, the roll is tagged and delivered by clamp truck to warehouse or to our customers.

Mathew Chakola told me that he would take me to the place where the American Civil War of 1862-4 was fought. In spite of the lack of time we rushed to see the site and a show of half an hour, which showed some scenes of the Civil War. We were there just one minute before one show was about to start. So we did not have to waste any time. After the show inside the War Museum Mathew showed me the chapel where the soldiers were praying every evening. They had a gentleman's agreement that they should not fight after the sun set. So the soldiers of both sides went to the same small chapel and prayed. I do not know what they prayed for.

They must have asked God to kill the worshippers in the same chapel belonging to the opposite side. If their request was not answered

the enemies would kill them next day. The point which impressed me was that at least they prayed in the same chapel. Because there was no other chapel nearby where the soldiers of both sides could go. Nobody would kill them while praying. Before the day broke they were taking their positions opposite to each other.

The battle of Antietam was remembered recently. When 6000 people were killed in World Trade Centre building in New York on Sept 11 this year somebody announced that this was the first day after the War at Antietam such a large number of people died on a single day in the American soil.

American Civil War (1861-1865)

In 1862 after the failure of the Peninsular campaign, President Abraham Lincoln named Henry W. Halleck general-in-chief of the Union armies. The Army of Virginia was organized in June 1862. General John Pope, a former subordinate of Halleck's, was put in command of the new army. Halleck ordered McClellan to bring his men back to Washington, where he was to join with the forces under John Pope.

On August 9, 1862 Jackson attacked Pope's advance units at Cedar Mountain near Culpeper, Virginia, and defeated them. Pope withdrew and waited near Rappahannock River and waited for McClellan. On August 29 General John Pope with 62,000 men attacked Jackson. Pope believed that he won the battle and sent a wire to that effect to Washington. James Longstreet and Lee moved up to strengthen Jackson's army the next day.

Pope's army was shattered by Longstreet's artillery and infantry and fled in disorder. Lee pursued and tried to cut off Pope's retreat the next day at Chantilly. Pope, thoroughly and humiliatingly beaten,

limped back to Washington. He had lost about 14,500 men to Lee's 9200. Pope's force was merged with the Army of the Potomac, and McClellan again was put in command of the entire force.

Battle of Antietam

After the Second Battle of Bull Run, Lee decided to invade Maryland.

Although he knew that he could not successfully attack Washington, he wanted to move the fighting out of war-torn Virginia, and he wanted to interrupt the North's supply lines. In addition, he thought that a success in the North might lead France or Britain to recognize the Confederacy. Lee moved across the Potomac River with his entire army and then sent the majority of his army under Jackson to Harpers Ferry. They were to seize the area and open up supply routes to the Shenandoah Valley. He then stationed the rest of his army at Sharpsburg, near Antietam Creek. McClellan with 75,000 men faced Lee across the creek. Jackson rejoined Lee after successfully capturing Harpers Ferry and the additional troops brought the total Confederate forces to about 35,000 soldiers.

The fighting began on September 17, and despite the superior number of Union forces, the Confederate Army was able to hold them off. Just as Union General Ambrose E. Burnside captured a bridge and led his men across the creek, A. P. Hill arrived with fresh reinforcements for Lee. The Union attack was repulsed, and the fighting stopped. Lee led his men in orderly retreat back to Virginia, and the North did not pursue him. Both sides had lost heavily, with total Union casualties of about 12,500 and Confederate casualties of about 10,500. The fighting was so fierce and the casualties so high that Antietam was the bloodiest one-day battle of the Civil War (and in all of U.S. history).

Although the outcome of the fighting was indecisive, Antietam was a major success for the Union. As a result of the battle, Lee lost approximately one-third of his men and gave up the idea of invading the North. Diplomatically the Confederate defeat at Antietam made it more difficult for France or Britain to openly support the the Confederacy.

Emancipation Proclamation

Antietam was also the signal for a major shift in Union policy. From the beginning of the war, President Lincoln had insisted that his primary aim was the restoration of the Union, not the abolition of slavery. As the war continued, however, Lincoln saw that the preservation of the Union depended, in part, on the destruction of slavery. The Lincoln Administration believed that if they made the abolition of slavery a war aim, they could stop Britain or France from recognizing the Confederacy. Both Britain and France had long since abolished slavery and would not support a country fighting a war to defend it. Furthermore, emancipation might allow the North to undercut the South's war effort, which was supported by slave labor.

Emancipation would also clarify the status of slaves who were running away to the Union lines. These black people were refugees and later soldiers in the Union Army. This activity, called self-emancipation, presented a problem to the Union Army. Were these black people free, or enslaved? Should they be returned to their Southern masters under the fugitive slave laws? Some military leaders had already tried to deal with this dilemma. Benjamin F. Butler, a Northern general stationed in Virginia, claimed that he would not return slaves to their masters because they were property, and in war time, the enemy's property can be seized. The Lincoln Administration agreed with Butler's policy.

In addition, public opinion in the North had begun to favor abolition, and Congress, no longer needing to be concerned about the Southern states, had started passing legislation to end slavery. In 1862 Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia and prohibited slavery in the territories.

On July 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln had informed his Cabinet that he intended to free the slaves in states that were in active rebellion. However, they had persuaded him to wait until a Northern victory because it would seem less like a desperate measure. Antietam served that purpose. Five days afterward, on September 22, Lincoln issued the first, or preliminary, Emancipation Proclamation. The final proclamation, issued on January 1, 1863, freed the slaves only in the states that had rebelled: Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and parts of Louisiana and Virginia.

The president issued the proclamation under the powers granted during war to seize the enemies' property. Lincoln only had the authority to end slavery in the Confederate states, and then the slaves were freed only as the Union armies made their way throughout the South. In the states that remained loyal to the Union slavery was protected by the Constitution. Slavery was only completely abolished throughout the United States by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which was ratified in 1865.

The Battle of Perryville

In August and September 1862, on the western front, the Confederate army invaded Kentucky. Although Kentucky was a slave state, it had not seceded from the Union. The people of Kentucky were divided over the issue of the war, and Kentucky recruits joined both the Confederate and the Union forces. When General Braxton

Bragg, who was in charge of the Army of Tennessee, and Major General Edmund Kirby Smith decided to move into Kentucky, they split their forces and headed north from Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Union forces in Kentucky were under the command of Major General Don Carlos Buell. The armies met at the Battle of Perryville on October 8, 1862. The battle was marked by confusion on both sides and did not produce a clear victory, but the Confederates retreated.

I learned a lot of American history from Mathew Chakola. But there was no time to take notes of these interesting episodes that took place nearly 80 years before I was born. I thought that I would take notes from some history books later. But I found it difficult to find out information about American civil war from my library. Finally internet helped me to gather correct information detailed above.

After spending one day with Mathew Chakola I was prepared to go to Cosmic Ovungal. I had conducted his marriage with Susan who was resident in Washington area. Her father's father was a member of our Church in Trichur.

He joined the Seventh Day Adventists Church. When marriages are arranged sometimes denominational differences disappear. I sometimes think that ecumenism which theologians are debating can be facilitated if young people defy denominational affiliations when they get married.

I had baptized Cosmic's younger sister Salvia in Delhi about 25 years ago. In the same way Cosmic's mother Smitha Andrews wanted me to baptize the daughter of Cosmic in this tour. However, Cosmic wanted his mother and sister to be witnesses to this event. It was not easy for his mother and sister to get visa. Americans do not grant visa like that. They are afraid that these visitors would not return

after the visa period is over. They look for a job. I cannot blame Americans for their strict policy. There are more than two million illegal immigrants in USA.

Cosmic and Susan live in an apartment in Baltimore. Cosmic and Susan came to Chackola House and drove me to Susan's parents for lunch. Susan's parents accompanied us to go and see the Baltimore harbour. The Aquarium is famous. We couldn't see it as it was being closed for the evening by the time we arrived.

C.P. Thomas, Susan's father's younger brother joined us for lunch that day. He was a teacher in the Spicer College, Poona that I had visited many years ago to meet my friend Dr. M. E. Cherian, who was the President of the Spicer College. Spicer College is a college run by the Seventh Day Adventist Church in India. Their public holiday is not on Sunday, but on Saturday. Mr. C.P. Thomas told me that there are a lot of old students of the Spicer College who have migrated to USA and Canada. He has read some of my books. He expressed his appreciation of the books of humour I had written. Mr. Thomas is well known in Washington circles among Indians. He was president of the Kerala Association in the DC area.

Cosmic Ovungal drove me to Washington D.C. He had taken direction to the city carefully from Dr. Sanford where I was to stay for one day. While spotting the mighty Pentagon building Cosmic took out his cell phone and began to talk to Dr. Jonathan Sanford. As we were crossing some bridge he was clarifying something about the directions. Since the traffic was so crowded I wished that Cosmic would stop clarifying further. Even if he took a wrong road it is better than an accident. I wish America would ban talking over the cell phone while driving, as some countries have done.

Dr. Jonathan Sanford works for Research Service of the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress in Washington D.C. was created

in 1800 for Congress' reference needs. The Library of Congress is the largest public Library in the world holding not just books but movies, photographs, Newspapers, Maps, and many other items. The Library has about 30 million books and 80 million other items stacked on more than 530 miles of shelves in three buildings.

Anna G. Eshoo is the Representative of the 14th District in California. She represents the Silicon Valley area. She lives in Atherton near San Jose. She is a Democrat. I do not know if she is in her 3rd term or 4th term. Her office is not on the top floor. If it is on the top floor, you are a junior. I am glad that she was not a junior. Her office was in the second floor. Perhaps in her next term she may find her office in the first floor.

The tenure of the Representative in the US Congress is only 2 years. I was thinking it was four years. Many of my friends said that it is 4 years. But Dr. Jonathan Sanford who is an expert of these matters told me that the term of a Congressman is only 2 years. In a way it is good so that they will get to work as soon as they get elected. At the same time it is not so good, as these Representatives have to spend their energy for re-election every two years.

I wanted to meet Anna Eshoo, as she is an Assyrian. I had met Adam Benjamin Jr. in 1977 in his office in the Congress. He was from Gary, Indiana. He was the first Assyrian to be elected to the US Congress. He died in 1984. He was a three-term Congressman. He was a faithful member of our Church. I had invited him to India. He was very happy to hear that we had many Assyrian Manuscripts in our Church in India. Anna Eshoo is the second Assyrian to be elected to the Congress.

There is no Anna Esho in the US Congress was the reply Dr. Sanford got when he tried to trace the Congresswoman. I said try "Anna

Isho". The response was negative. Did she lose the election last time? Yes, it is a possibility in politics. The Representative to the US Congress is not a life long appointment like the bishops. Some people think that term appointment is better in the case of bishops too. Perhaps I should not drag that topic to our discussion at this point. Let people debate that in the appropriate forum.

There is some form of Anna Esho. My spelling can be wrong. Since it is a personal name I can not look in a Thesaurus for synonyms. I was disappointed that the Americans cannot trace the telephone number of a US Representative. I was under the wrong notion that Americans can trace all details about all people under the sun even if a spelling is wrong. Finally the person with whom Dr.Sanford was enquiring asked whether it could be Anna Eshoo with one more 'o' added to the spelling I was telling. Finally Dr. Sanford fixed up the appointment. We went to the Congress office. Her staff escorted us to the office hall where committee meetings were held.

Anna Eshoo was happy to meet me. She asked me to speak in Assyrian. I told her that I recite prayers in the old language spoken by Jesus Christ. She asked me to try to speak in that language. It was difficult for me to speak Assyrian. I told her that I understand the language. I attempted to use some Assyrian words mixed with my English during our conversation. I am glad that she is proud of her Assyrian ancestry.

I do not know whether Congresswoman Anna Eshoo makes much noise in the US Congress. When I asked some people whether they knew Anna Eshoo the reply was negative. Nevertheless I am happy to see an e-mail reproduced below which mentions the name of Anna Eshoo. I do not understand the intricate topic easily. Yet I am glad that she has studied the topic and spoken intelligently. It is about disease and cloning.

There are critics opposing scientific research on some ethical grounds. The e-mail sent by one Dave Perry is very critical of Anna Eshoo's stand during the debate in the US Congress on cloning.

"Anna Eshoo (Democrat-California) As we stand on the brink of finding the cures to diseases that have plagued so many millions of Americans, unfortunately, the Congress today in my view is on the brink of prohibiting this critical research.

Eshoo gets the prize. The brink? The claim that cloning, and the stem cells it might produce, is on the verge of bringing a cure to your sick father with Alzheimer's or your debilitated mother with Parkinson's is a scandal. It is a cruel deception perpetrated by cynical scientists and ignorant politicians. Its purpose is clear: to exploit the desperation of the sick to garner political support for ethically problematic biotechnology.

The brink? Cloning animals, let alone humans, is so imperfect and difficult that it took 277 attempts before dolly the sheep was cloned. Scientists estimate that the overall failure rate for cloning farm animals is 95 percent or greater. New experiments with cloned mice have shown gross deformities. And here is the worst part. We have no idea why. We understand little about how reprogrammed genes work. Scientists don't even know how to screen with any test for epigenetic abnormality.

In other words: Even if you could grow embryonic stem cells out of grandma's skin cells, we have no idea yet how to regulate and control these cells in a way to

effect a cure. Just growing them in tissue culture is difficult enough. Then you have to tweak them to make precisely the kind of cells grandma needs. Then you have to inject them and hope to God that you don't kill her."

Arlington Cemetery

One of the attractions in Washington, DC is the Arlington Cemetery. I was there during my visit to Washington in 1977. Therefore I didn't go there this time. As I write this travelogue the **Useless newsletter** in my e-mail box brings the following useful information. Hence I copy it for the information of the readers of this book. "More than 260,000 people are buried at Arlington Cemetery. Arlington National Cemetery conducts approximately 5,400 burials each year. Funerals, including interments and inurnments, average 20 a day. Arlington National Cemetery has the second-largest number of people buried of any national cemetery in the United States. The largest of the 130 national cemeteries is the Calverton National Cemetery, on Long Island, near Farmingdale, New York. That cemetery conducts more than 7,000 burials each year.

James Parks, a former Arlington Estate slave, dug the first graves in Arlington National Cemetery. Buried in Section 15. James Parks is the only person buried in Arlington National Cemetery who was born on the property."

This visit to Washington D.C. was short. It was three days only. I had to stay with three families. My brother-in-law's niece Sudha Jacob lives there. I telephoned to her. There was no answer. I did not get time to make a second attempt. Linson Thomas, a young computer engineer from Trichur, heard about my visit to Washington. He telephoned to me. But there was no time to meet him. His grand father was my teacher in the Chaldean Syrian High

School, Trichur. He was the “drawing master”, the one who teaches to draw maps and such.

This was my fifth visit to Washington D.C. The first was in September 1968. I went from Princeton to Washington D.C. by bus to get a visa to go to Iraq. The Iraqis has severed diplomatic relation with America. Therefore there was a board on the front of the Iraqi Embassy. It was officially known as “Indian Embassy”. They granted me visa. I flew from J.F. Kennedy airport to Baghdad via Denmark.

Second visit was in May 1977. I was the guest of Anthony Planthara and Dr. Mrs. Maria. Miss Theresa Varghese of the World Bank, sister of my brother-in-law, arranged for my visit to Washington D.C.

The third visit was in May 1992 when I was the guest of Dr. Jonathan Sanford. I also visited Brock Brower and his wife. I used to baby-sit for their children in Princeton in 1967-68. One of those children made it to the Hollywood.

During my first visit I was in Washington D.C. only for one day. On Thursday 12th September 1968 I arrived by bus from New York and returned the same evening. The purpose of my visit was to obtain visa to go to Baghdad, Iraq. I had only one hour free to see the city.

My second visit was in May 1977. At the time I traveled by an Amtrak train ticket which I had purchased at the Chicago railway station after celebrating Qurbana for Easter in St. John's Assyrian Church and spending two days with Dr. Davy Emmatty who was living in Bowling Green, Ohio. At that time I visited World Bank, Library of Congress, Arlington Cemetery, White House, and the Capitol building.

In my third visit Dr. Jonathan Sanford and his daughters Susan, Alice and Jane accompanied me to the Pentagon. On the visit on Monday

'25th May 1992 I penned the following paragraphs on Pentagon in my book **Washington to New York**, *pages 68-71*.

Pentagon

On Monday, 25th May being Memorial Day my hosts had a holiday. Dr. Jonathan Sanford and his three daughters Susan, Alice and Jane took me to see the Pentagon. Being a holiday the offices at the Pentagon were closed. We were told that I could go next day and join a tour of Pentagon.

We decided to walk around the Pentagon on our own. After walking two sides, I asked my hosts whether the Pentagon was a square building. The 13-year-old Susan replied, "Pentagon is a Pentagon. It cannot be a square." I should be ashamed of my ignorance, I thought. Then I realized that the Sanfords live in Washington, hence there was nothing special about their knowledge that Pentagon had five sides. Had I lived in Washington I would have poked my nose to smell what was going on in the Pentagon.

As I walked around this five-sided building an airplane was flying over us. I wondered whether it was safe to walk in the lawn. I consoled myself that at present everything was safe. Saddam Hussein of Iraq was not allowed to fly winged aircraft. All aircrafts of Iraq except the helicopters are grounded. So he would not fly to Pentagon to exhibit his fury against the Pentagon. Another powerful antagonist, i.e., the Soviet Union is disintegrated and Russia, alone would not attempt a show down with the Pentagon. That thought gave me a sneaking suspicion; "Has Gorbachev given proper and correct instructions to

Yeltsin which button to press to destroy Washington.”
I hope Yeltsin is keeping his secret secure and safe.

We walked almost $4\frac{1}{2}$ sides of the 5-sided building when we realized that we could not reach where we had started. We asked a security man if there was a short cut to the opposite side of the Pentagon. He admitted that he did not know. There must be some secret tunnel under the building. We can enter the gate from one side and cross the inside quadrangle (or Pentangle if there is such a word) and walk to the opposite side. But such a short cut was not possible. We walked back to square one. Thus we covered $4\frac{1}{2}$ sides of this 5-sided building. The perimeter of the Pentagon is said to be $\frac{4}{5}$ of a mile. Thus the distance we covered to and fro is more than a mile and a half. We were tired and delayed. Therefore we decided to restrict our remaining programme to the War Memorial cemetery and Lincoln Monument.

Indian newspapers watch what is happening in the Pentagon. Why, the whole world is watching what Pentagon is doing or thinking of doing.

In fact the surveillance of the Pentagon over the whole world must be of greater proportion than the amount of attention world nations give to Pentagon.

The front-page news in *Indian Express* dated May 25, 1992 (that is the day I visited Pentagon) shows how carefully India is watching what the Pentagon is watching.

Pentagon drops ‘hegemony’ reference to India

WASHINGTON – The final strategic US Defense

Secretary Richard Cheney signed planning document after its principal author, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz removed references in the earlier document to India and other countries as potential 'hegemonies' who have to be stopped, if necessary by the use of force by the US.

India had been clubbed as posing a hegemonic threat to neighbours – in language first used by the late Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in his India-baiting speeches – along with Japan, Germany and Russia.

The strange world view of the Pentagon, reportedly drafted in consultation with key White House officials and some State Department officials, despite their denials, became known when the New York Times leaked it extensively.

The dropping of the objectionable portions also comes through the leak to the Washington Post of what the paper calls 'a near final draft'. The actual document itself is classified 'secret' and 'noFORN' (or no foreigners should be allowed to see it).

When the February 18, 1992, draft was leaked by the New York Times and later the Post it drew a storm of public protest from India, Japan and Germany.

My 4th visit to Washington D.C. was in 1995. I stayed with Dr. Jonathan Sanford again. During that trip I visited the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. Fr. Sidney Griffith, a Syriac scholar, whom I had met in SEERI, Kottayam received me and showed me around the library. His secretary Monica Blanchard drove me back to the house of Dr. Sanford.

Chapter 4

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

This was my second visit to Florida. My first visit was in October 1998. My brother-in-law Prof. Alexander V. Alex retired from his job after he completed 65 years of age. Then he shifted his residence from Columbus, Ohio to Orlando, Florida. He likes warm weather.

At that time he found an apartment near a lake. After a year or so he found vacant land near a lake to build a house. Now the building is completed with swimming pool and Jacuzzi.

Dr. Lonappen Paul Chakola is my neighbour in Trichur. I blessed his marriage. Then about a quarter of a century later I blessed his daughter's marriage. During my last visit to Florida my sister and her husband Prof. Alexander Alex drove me to Dade City near Tampa where the Lonappen family lives. This time he and his wife Susheela came to Orlando with their son Paul. Paul has a project paper written about our Church. I quote below from his paper.

“While growing up and taking frequent trips back to Kerala the thought of more Hindus than Christians did not seem possible. This is ironic considering we are talking about India. In fact it does not ever seem to have been a question. It has always seemed that everybody was Christian. Everyone the author's family knows and associates with is part of the upper middle class and of the Chaldean faith. It always seemed normal to be surrounded to be Christians until the realization that not everyone is rich. A lack of class-consciousness was finally made apparent can be

interesting when a minority group holds so much power. This type of situation can cause resentment and dangerous backlashes such as the ones occurring today in India by Hindus against Christians. This type of resentment could be reminiscent of that held against the Jews during World War II Germany. Although there is growing sentiment against Christian institutions it does not seem likely that any atrocious events could take place.”

On Sunday 24th June I preached during the Holy Qurbana in the Indian Orthodox Syrian Church. Fr. A.M. Zakaria, a retired headmaster in Kerala, is the priest of this small congregation. There are no deacons. Prof. Alex and some others are the altar boys. Altar boys are not boys like the ones in the Catholic Churches. In Orthodox Churches older people serve as servers at the altar to assist the priest.

I used many holy jokes during my sermon. The young and the old listened very carefully. The young people told my sister that they should arrange my talks at least once in every two months. I would like it if I have retirement in Orlando.

To me a service in the Orthodox Syrian Church is not new. During my studies for Bachelor of Divinity Degree in Jabalpur (1,400 miles away from Trichur) in 1957 to 1961 I used to attend the Orthodox Syrian Church service. When I was studying for S.T.M. (Master of Sacred Theology) degree in the Union Theological Seminary, New York City I used to attend the service of the same Church, which was held in the chapel of that seminary. One of my classmates for the STM Degree was Fr.C.O.Vargis. He was a priest of the Indian Orthodox Syrian Church.

Fr. C.O. Vargis is now a priest of that Church in Houston, Texas. I telephoned to him from Orlando to renew our friendship. He invited me to visit him in Houston. There was no time in my schedule to visit him or his parish. I have never been to Houston, although I have been to two other cities in the state of Texas namely Austin and Dallas. Maybe I will visit Houston in future.

I just read in Internet that there is a plan to build an Assyrian Church of the East in West Houston on a 1.6-acre plot proposed to be purchased for that purpose. The Assyrian people also settle down in different parts of USA like the Indian Christians.

Rev. K.T.Alexander and his wife Dr. Ely Alexander were there in Orlando. Rev. Alexander is the first cousin of my brother -in -law Prof.Alexander Alex. Rev. Alexander is a close friend of Mr. K.R. Narayanan, the President of India. Rev. Alexander and his wife were guests at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan (Presidential Palace) in New Delhi on their way from Cochin to the USA.

During our three years together in the Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur the Revd. Alexander concentrated more on public relations than studies. Therefore he did not earn a doctorate. On the other hand he has many friends like the President of India. People have different talents and tastes.

In Orlando, Florida I was very much impressed by the Holy Land Experience. My eldest brother Joe Mookan took me there. My sister Leela's granddaughter Brianna was with us. During my last visit to Orlando in October 1998 my sister took me to the Disney Land. Holy Land Experience is cheaper, the admission fee being only \$17. By Indian calculation it is about Rs. 780.

As soon as we entered the area many people began to notice my

beard. There are two Rabbis on the show. They came near me and told me that my beard is bigger than theirs.

Holy Land Experience

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

BEHAVIORIAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Holy Land Experience “is a Christian facility that purposes to exalt and uplift our Lord Jesus Christ. For that reason, the standard of the Holy Land Experience is distinctive and different from other, secular facilities in the area.

DRESS CODE

We understand guests will be entering our facilities wearing a variety of attire. However the following attire is not permitted at The Holy Land Experience, and the guest(s) will be asked to leave and / or change clothes before re-entering the facility. Guests cannot enter in any kind of costume and will not be permitted to enter if, in our view the dress is immodest. Guests must wear shirt and shoes. Guests cannot wear halter-, short shorts, or bathing suits. We reserve the right to ask anyone to leave who is, in our judgment, wearing inappropriate or immodest attire.

WORSHIP CODE

We recognize that people of various faiths and denominations will visit The Holy Land Experience, and we appreciate and encourage the worship of God. However, we reserve the right to remove anyone (or any group of people) from the facilities if, in our view, their religious activity is deemed by staff to be causing a disturbance.

BEHAVIOR CODE

If our staff observes a guest engaged in an inappropriate behavior,

(drunken behavior, lewd and lascivious conduct, etc). the Holy Land Experience reserves the right to remove the individual from the premises.

MISCELLANEOUS CODES

There is no permission to bring food and beverages into the Holy Land Experience. Smoking is not allowed on the premises. Guest(s) participating in the aforementioned activities will be asked to desist and/or leave the facility. Also, no pet animals may be brought into The Holy Land Experience, except those required in providing special assistance (i.e., seeing eye dogs).

THE JERUSALEM STREET MARKET

In this thriving and fascinating, 2000-year-old, Middle Eastern marketplace enjoy with the street merchants of browsing our themed shops: The Old Scroll Shop and Methuselah's Mosaics.

THE QUMARAN DEAD SEA CAVES

In 1947, a young Bedouin shepherd boy discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls within these desert caves. These amazing scrolls would confirm the extraordinary accuracy of the Holy Scriptures.

Interior exhibit: Opening 2002

THE WILDERNESS TABERNACLE

The colorful Bedouin tent looming overhead serves as the queuing area for the Wilderness Tabernacle. Inside, enjoy an awe-spring, 25-minute presentation of the Old Testament ritual of worship. Against a starry desert sky, behold the high priest as he takes you on a spectacular journey of Israel's ancient priesthood, culminating with the glory of God revealed above the Sacred Ark of the Covenant.

CALVARY'S GARDEN TOMB

Follow the Via Dolorosa Path past the remains of Roman Road, an

Olive press, and indigenous plants and the trees of the Holy Land toward Calvary's Garden Tomb. This was the road on which Jesus Christ carried His cross. At the Tomb, spend sometime resting, praying, or reflecting in the garden as our drama team powerfully depicts the message of the gospel in word and music.

THE PLAZA OF THE NATIONS AND THE TEMPLE OF THE GREAT KING

Surrounded by over 30 Roman columns, along with sixteen oil lamps hanging overhead. The Plaza of the Nation is certainly a breathtaking sight. Towering six stories high in front of you is The Temple of the Great King – called the Herodian Temple in its day. This was God's home on earth. It was the same place where Abraham, nearly two millennia before Christ was born, was to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. King Solomon also built the very Temple on the same site. And in the time of Jesus, the priest would gather on the steps and sing Psalms of Ascent to the Lord.

THEATRE OF LIFE

Embark on an incredible journey through history in The Theatre of Life located within the Temple. This dramatic, impressive, and multi-sensory, 25-minute film *The Seed of Promise*, powerfully communicates God's master plan for redeeming mankind. The scene opens in A.D. 70 as the Romans use a battering ram to crash the Temple doors while the priests hold unwaveringly to the belief that their sacrifices will save them from destruction.

THE OASIS PALMS CAFÉ:

Immediately inside the Arabian-themed Oasis Palms Café, Turkish urns of cascading water greet you while high overhead, an ancient dome with a Moroccan chandelier shelters you from the sun. Authentic Bedouin tapestries from Jerusalem surround you as you dine you on reasonably priced American or Middle Eastern foods in this festive environment.

THE JERUSALEM MODEL A.D. 66:

Take a special personal tour of our Jerusalem Model A.D. 66. It is the largest indoor model of Jerusalem in the world and has taken more than a year of our craftsmen to build. Each detailed presentation describes the development of the city throughout the centuries and traces the movement of Jesus during the last week of His life leading up to Calvary.

COMING SOON - EARLY 2000

The Byzantine Cardo, a themed, lakeside promenade, will lead directly to The Scriptorium, which will be one of the private collections of biblical artifacts in the world including cuneiform scrolls, codices, manuscripts and bibles.

We went again next day to visit the same place. We told them that we just wanted to take some pictures for my travelogue book to be published in India. They let us go and take pictures without any admission fee. If they had insisted that we had to pay again then their picture would not have appeared in this book. Now they got good publicity through my book. Hope that the Christians visiting Orlando, Florida would pay a visit to **the Holy Land Experience** in addition to the Disneyland.

The last day with my sister we went briefly to visit the Disney Market Place. It is free admission. The shop owners will still make profit as lots of children and tourists visit this place. I did not show much interest in seeing places, as I am getting older. We drove through the area where they showed me the huge house of a priest from Kerala. Closer to that place was a palace like mansion built by a Pakistani. I do not know why people build huge houses.

Chapter 5

DALLAS, TEXAS

On Wednesday 27th June my sister Leela, her husband Alexander Alex, their grand daughter Brianna and my eldest brother Jose Mookken saw me off at the Orlando airport. The flight was full. As we reached the ticket counter for boarding just a couple of minutes before the boarding time of 7.15 a.m. the lady at the counter told me that she could give me only the middle seat; as the seats on the windows and aisles to Chicago were already assigned. She however gave me a window seat for my onward journey from Chicago to Dallas.

It is always convenient to get both the boarding passes in your hand. Otherwise we will have to queue for the boarding pass in Chicago. The boarding gate number in Chicago will not be shown in the boarding pass. We have to look it up at the monitors in Chicago. The gate number will be known sometimes only an hour or two prior to the departure of each flight. Sometimes the airports are crowded. There they may even change the gate number after it is announced once. Then the passengers have to rush to the newly assigned gate. I had that experience two or three times in the past.

Economy Plus

Usually I travel by economy class. My travel agent in India told me that he felt ashamed to reserve my flight in economy class as he was doing reservations for some other bishops in the business class. He reminded me that the economy class is crowded and that I will not get enough legroom while travelling. I told him that I travel always by the cheapest class, except sometimes when my hosts make

reservations, giving considerations to my status as an Archbishop as well as my old age. About four years ago the organizers of a meeting purchased my train ticket on a concession rate of senior citizen. They had written my age as 67 instead of 57. I do not know the real intention of my hosts. Perhaps they wanted to honour me as a senior citizen or they wanted to save money on the ticket by adding ten years to my life.

The flight coupon and boarding pass were given to me in an envelope. I noticed a new advertisement: "Try our new section with up to 5 inches of EXTRA LEGROOM." I was not sure whether my seat was in this "Extra LEGROOM" area or not. I am glad that I am half an inch short of 5 and half feet. My legs must be shorter than those of my elder brother Professor Andrews Mookan who is close to six feet or his son Deepak who is more than six feet. A height of six feet may be helpful to basketball players, but definitely not to the passengers sitting in the ordinary economy class. I do not know how much more it costs for the 5 inches of extra legroom. As I had two hours at Chicago airport I decided to scribble a few pages for this American travelogue. There were some passengers using their cell phone. Others were making use of the public phones available at the airport. There are no queues at the public telephones as before, as many were using their own cell phones.

There were no smokers as it is prohibited in the main halls of the airport. When smoking was first prohibited inside the aircrafts a few years ago, there were some smokers desperately puffing in the halls as they were waiting for boarding the flights. Now the smokers leave to take their last puff before they enter the airport.

Some were engaged in conversation at the time of waiting for the next connection. Others were taking photographs. Although photographs are prohibited at the airports in India, there is no such

restriction in America. American tourists complain that their films were confiscated when caught in the act of taking photos at the Indian airports. They bitterly narrate the stories of unfriendliness of the Indian officials of the bonafide ignorance of the Americans regarding the rule against photography in the airports.

When I reached Dallas Fort Worth International airport in Dallas, Texas, Dr. K.P. Yohannan, Founder President of the **Gospel For Asia** met me. He hails from Tiruvilla, about 120 kms. from Trichur, my hometown in Kerala, India. It is the 6th busiest airport in the world as far as the number of passengers is concerned. As the number of passengers increase, the car park becomes crowded. One has to wait for a long time for the car to come from the car park.

There is no solution to this problem, except that the people use public transportation or construct four car parks to be located one mile to the east, west, south and north. The passengers without much baggage could take shuttle buses to such car parks. Then the rush at the airport will be less congested. The main disadvantage will be when the passengers come with trolleys with baggage.

On Thursday 28th June I visited the office of **Gospel for Asia** at 1800 Golden Trail Court, at Carrollton, Texas 75010. Carrollton is a suburb of Dallas. I shared some thoughts during the Morning Prayer hour with the staff of GFA. My host and dear friend K.P. Yohannan introduced me to the group as a bishop of the great missionary Church that took gospel message to many parts of Asia in the early centuries. He emphasized the point that the Gospel is not welcome in some parts of Asia such as Tibet where we do not have any access.

There are now tombstone inscriptions in Kyrgistan and some other ex – USSR areas. Mine was a Church that did the greatest missionary

work throughout Asia. It was a Church on Fire as John Stuart subtitled his book named **Nestorian Missionary Enterprise**. The first edition of this book of 1929 as well as the reprint made in 1961 at Mar Narsai Press in Trichur are out of print. The reading of that book inspired me when I was a young boy.

Some of the staff at the **Gospel for Asia** came to me after the morning devotions and told me that they appreciated my talk. Their comment, I believe, is not to satisfy my ego, but it is a tribute to our forefathers who were pioneer missionaries to the eastern countries since the Middle Ages. I record here not to boast of our past, but to inspire the present leaders and youngsters of this ancient once – glorious Church to recapture that missionary vision.

It goes without saying that some of them referred to my sense of humour. Brother K.P. Yohannan introduced me actually holding up my book **Laugh with the Bishop** saying “Here is the author of the book.” It brought smiles to the faces of most people. Therefore I knew that I had no choice. If I pretended to be serious, they would think that I was only a duplicate or a plagiarist who could steal from other humorous authors. I just tried to be genuine, just as I am. My remarks were humorous to them. I believe it is necessary to be so in the world of tensions, sickness, death etc. I often see many unhappy faces around us. Our Christian hope helps us to be happy and “cool”, if I borrow an expression many American youngsters use.

The staff members in the GFA office are different from others. They are friendly people. They are professional. They come to serve in the office not for the financial consideration. It is a vocation, calling to the cause of the gospel. All are Americans in this office. They love India. The map of India is not only on the walls of their office rooms but also in their hearts.

The next day I was given a room in that office to quietly write down these words I knew that I would not get time to write until I would reach India five days later. I was constantly on the move. Teresa Chupp, the young and energetic secretary of Dr. K.P. Yohannan, who had seen me in Tiruvilla two months earlier, knocked at my door with a hot cup of tea as I was writing these words.

A young man named Gene Joseph Alexander walked into the room as I wrote several pages of this travelogue. I am fast in writing as well as in talking and eating. When I met him the previous day I had not realized that he had his roots in south India. He told me that he lives in Hamilton near Toronto and his mother is from Gudalore near Nilambur in North Kerala border and his father is from Thalavady near Tiruvalla. He grew up in Canada. Now he learns Hindi and is attempting to learn Malayalam. This young man is an assistant in making documentaries. Their young people are attracted to gospel work, without being spoiled by the affluence of the west.

In the office of Dr. K.P. Yohannan I discussed the common concerns in the cause of evangelism. The **Believers Church**, that has grown as an offshoot of the activities of the **Gospel For Asia** has a membership of about half a million members in India, Nepal, Burma etc., In India they are more in North India than in Kerala, our home state.

The **Gospel For Asia** does not want to indulge in sheep stealing. Therefore Dr. K.P. Yohannan does not concentrate in Kerala. His vision is not limited. Some of the Pentecostals in Kerala are kept at a distance by the orthodox Syrian Christians of Kerala, because the evangelism of the Pentecostal church was mainly to convert the Syrian Christians rather than pagans. More than half of the Pentecostal churches in Kerala have their roots in the Orthodox Syrian Church, Marthoma Church, Syrian Catholic Church, (Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara), Chaldean Syrian Church and such. The grand parents

of many Pentecostalists today had two baptisms namely the infant baptism in their own Episcopal Church and later in the Pentecostal assemblies. In the present generation such instances are rare. The flow from the established Churches has been clogged.

As I sat in the office of Dr. K.P. Yohannan I patiently watched him answering the innumerable telephone calls from all over the globe. He replies in Malayalam when the call is from his office in Tiruvalla. The **Gospel For Asia** (www.gfa.org) has offices in USA, Canada, Germany, U.K. in addition to that in Tiruvalla in Kerala, India. He talks about 10/40 Window, which is a rectangular-shaped area on our globe extending from West Africa to East Asia, from 10 degrees north to 40 degrees north of the equator.

The 10/40 Window contains the Muslim countries as well as China, Nepal, Burma, India etc. This area contains the highest concentration of least evangelized countries and people. The Western Church gives only 0.1% of its resources to penetrate this darkness. The **Gospel For Asia** challenges Christians in the eastern countries to reach these people with the gospel of Christ.

Books and leaflets, radio talks and TV programmes are used by Dr. K.P. Yohannan to preach the gospel. Millions of people listen to radio talks of Dr. K.P. Yohannan daily. Thousands in Kerala partake of this spiritual feast before they breakfast every morning at 6.15 am. On Sundays before they go to church they watch Dr. Yohannan preach on TV from 7 to 7.30 am.

The beautiful music and simple messages have captivated the educated as well as the ordinary audience. This programme is watched not only in Kerala but outside Kerala state too wherever Malayalam speaking people reside or sojourn. As a matter of fact I first watched Brother K.P. Yohannan on TV when I was in Madras

(now known as Chennai) for the parish day of our Mar Qardagh Church.

“Don’t drink” has been a constant plea of Dr. Yohannan over the radio and his many public platforms. “Don’t break up the family” is another thrust of sermons and writings. It is a fact that many Christians as well as non-Christians have given up alcoholism by his messages. There is a lot more to be done in this area if we want to keep a minimum standard of Christian principles in the life of the Churches in Kerala. It is not an easy task. Nevertheless, it is an urgent task.

“How did you find time to write nearly 60 books? was the constantly asked question when I reached 60 years of age. My reply was “by hard work.” Now I should say, “Ask Dr. K.P. Yohannan “. He wrote 150 books. He has ten more years to go to reach 60 years of age. He writes all his books in addition to his work in his offices around the globe. I was happy to see somebody who has done much more than what I had done. My sincere prayer to our Master is, “May He bless him abundantly.”

The books of Dr. K.P. Yohannan were not editions of just 1000 copies only. It had many copies in each edition and there were reprints of his books. One book I was reading **Revolution in World Missions** had already 700,000 copies sold. It is known as a National Bestseller. His books are printed in excellent form in elegant style. His books do not have printer’s devils. A situation that is only in my dream for my books.

Gospel for Asia is planning to start a huge printing Press near its office in Tiruvalla. This web Press will be able to print Bibles in 12 languages in large quantities. The wheels of the Press will start rolling on 2nd August this year. I accepted his invitation to be present on

the occasion at Tiruvalla. The New Testament in many Indian languages will be available for mass distribution. The cost of each Bible will be less when it is produced in a large scale. Within a few years millions in India who have opportunity to hear the gospel will be able to possess at least a New Testament in their native languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu and such.

The **Believer's Church** promoted by the Gospel for Asia is praying for a better-organized Episcopal form with an impeccable leader of integrity and commitment to Christ like Dr.K.P.Yohannan as its bishop. The **Believers Church** has a role to play in modern India and the neighbouring countries.

The Asian Bible Seminary in Tiruvilla is offering both the courses of Serampore Senate as well as Asian Theological Accreditation Committee based in Philippines. There is a wrong notion among some theologically trained people in India that Serampore Senate courses are meant for those opting for liberal interpretation of the gospel. William Carey, the founder of the Serampore College, was not a liberal theologian. The phrase Liberation Theology was not known in his times. It is difficult to define the words Liberal Theology and Liberation Theology. One thing is certain that William Carey (died 1834) was a great missionary who suffered much to translate the Holy Bible into the Indian languages. The Serampore College stands as a lasting contribution of this "Cobbler" from England.

The Asian Biblical Seminary in Tiruvilla today is one of the prestigious theological Seminaries in India in excellence as well as the number of students who come from all over India. As one who had the opportunity to earn Bachelor's degree (B.D.), Master's (M. Th.) and Doctorate (D.Th.) degree from Serampore Senate. I was happy to hear that Serampore Senate has permitted to offer M. Th. (Master of Theology) degree in addition to the B.D. degree already being offered.

I was the first Keralite or Malayalee to obtain M. Th. degree in Church History from Serampore Senate. That was in 1966. I am the 3rd Indian. The first was Rev. D.A. Christadas and the second Rev. D.V. Singh. As for the D.Th. degree, I became the first Indian. Rev. D.V. Singh kept his second place, while professor D.A. Christadas could not complete his doctorate. Both these late reverends were good professors of Church History in the last generation. In the last quarter of the last century dozens of theologians have taken M. Th. in Church History from Serampore Senate. The number of Doctorates in this field is less than a dozen, I guess. There are several of my junior colleagues like Bishop J.W. Gladstone of CSI in Trivandrum who have done their doctorate in Church History in Germany, or Prof. George Thomas in Germany, Rev. Prof. George Oommen of Bangalore in Australia and other friends in America and such places.

My sincere prayer and wish is that the Asian Biblical Seminary in Tiruvalla will produce many Masters and Doctors in Church History and other theological fields to be Professors in theological seminaries in Asia and abroad to train our leaders of the next generation.

At the age of 61 I do not have to feel expanded or exhausted, but some sort of nostalgia made me to pen the above paragraphs as I prayerfully thought of Asian Biblical Seminary and the great need of training the future generation of church leaders.

In addition to a major seminary, the **Believer's Church** owns 34 Bible Schools that train local preachers and pastors. The **Believer's Church** requires that the clergy of this church should have a minimum theological training of B.D. level. My church does not impose it strictly. At least two year's of college education is a minimum requirement imposed by us in recent years. We do have clergy who did not have college education. Now the salaries of the

clergy are higher. There I hope that very soon all our future clergy will have B.A. degree at least. The B.D. degree also is expected. As our lay people are educated we should raise the educational standards of our clergy.

The theological education is expensive. Co-operation with other seminaries is a must. As we go to the secular universities for academic degrees, we should be able to do our theological training in interdenominational Seminaries. I am glad that **Asian Biblical Seminary** already has the vision to be useful for the clergy of other Churches. At present students from different denominations in Kerala and outside have already started to study in this Seminary. The students have not only the freedom but also obligation to return to their own Churches to serve.

The magazine called **Send** received the Award of Excellence of the Evangelical Press Association, the Award of Merit in the Missionary category for the year 2000.

It is published once in two months. The GFA office has good technicians as well as excellent equipments for designing the pages. They are expecting better equipments to meet the increasing demands for printing and posting. Thousands of letters have to be answered daily. The dedicated staff without grumbling works hard to discharge the duties entrusted to them.

There not many people are seen idling their time away as seen in the government offices in India. Just 100 people do what thousand people could do in India. There is no class IV category workers here. In India we have peons, sweepers and drivers who are classified under class IV category. In America all bishops are drivers. I do not anticipate to work as a Bishop in America, as I cannot drive.

The genius of the **Gospel for Asia** is that it encourages only native missionaries. Their leaflet explains, “Native missionaries are highly effective because they work in their own culture or a similar culture. They already know, or can easily learn, the language, customs and culture of the people where they minister.

They don't need visas and live economically at the same level as their neighbors. The **Gospel for Asia** wants to send 1,00,000 native missionaries to the 97% unevangelised people. At present the number of **GFA** missionaries is 11,000 in eight Asian countries. There are 22 radio broadcasts in 20 Asian languages. **GFA** receives more than average of a thousand letters a day. About 16, 000 new mission stations were established. Among them 9000 are fully established churches named Believer's Churches. The **Gospel For Asia** missionaries establish an average of six mission stations daily.

Muslim Outreach

About 140 million Muslims live in India alone. It is more than the combined population of Iran, Iran and Saudi Arabia. **GFA** has radio broadcast in Bengali language for more than 200 million population of Muslims in Bengla Desh as well as West Bengal.

Asia has 97% of the world's unreached people of the world. Christian gospel is not permitted to penetrate into countries like Tibet and Saudi Arabia. There are restrictions in some other Asian countries too. Even in a secular democracy like India foreign missionaries cannot go to evangelize. They can go as tourists. Visa is difficult for missionaries to obtain even to work as doctors or engineers.

Native Christians have to do missionary work in India. **Gospel for Asia** is an answer to such situation. Foreigners can pray and pay for India's missionary labours. India permits foreign money for

educational institutions, hospitals and orphanages. Some Hindu organizations question the intentions of such foreign money aiding Christian hospitals and schools. The fact is that foreign aid to Christian missions in India is a negligible portion of the total foreign aid flowing to India.

About some of the activities of the **GFA** we read in their leaflet as follows:

Church Planting (Statistics as of January 2001)

All ministry work done by our native missionaries contributes toward the goal of planting local churches. GFA native missionaries have established almost 16,000 new mission stations. Of these, more than 9,000 have become fully established churches, named Believers Churches. Currently our missionaries establish an average of nearly six new mission stations everyday.

Radio Ministry

Gospel for Asia produces and airs 22 radiobroadcasts in 20 Asian languages. Millions who never could have reached any other way are now hearing the Gospel on a daily basis. Despite high illiteracy rates, we receive more than 25,000 letters each month from listeners whose lives have been changed forever through the gospel broadcasts.

Literature Production and Distribution

Gospel tracts printed in native languages are one of the most powerful tools on the Asian mission fields to reach the masses.

Gospel for Asia has become one of the largest agencies in the subcontinent, printing nearly 50 million pieces of Gospel literature every year to supply to our native missionaries as well as other ministries.

There is a lot more to record here about the activities of the **Gospel for Asia**. I cannot attempt anything like that. A younger man from my home state of Kerala humbled his life before Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord honoured him using him as an instrument in evangelizing many parts of Asia.

Mathew Chakola (Viji), son of Prof. C.J. George of Ernakulam, Cochin came to take me from the office of the **Gospel for Asia**. On the way to his home he stopped at the **Christian Arts Centre**, which is six miles north of downtown Dallas. The local pastor of the Church of South India, Rev. Dr. Ninan Verghese was with us. He knew the roads of Dallas well, as he had been living in Dallas for a long time. Although there is an admission fee to see the “Miracle of Pentecost” presentation we didn’t pay. The staff didn’t ask us to pay for it. I do not know whether it was due to some respect for my beard or cassock.

The **Biblical Arts Center** is a museum whose sole purpose is to utilize the arts as a means to help people of all faiths more clearly envision the places, events and people of the Bible. Artworks, ranging from Old Masters to contemporaries, are displayed in both permanent and changing galleries. The Colonnade Gallery, Miracle at Pentecost Gallery and the Founder’s Gallery feature works such as “Rebecca at the Well”, “Madonna and Child”, and the Resurrected Christ”. Changing every six to eight weeks, the East Gallery features exhibitions ranging from ancient archaeological artifacts to contemporary spiritual arts.

The highlight of the **Biblical Arts Center** is the “Miracle at Pentecost” mural. Measuring 124 feet wide by 20 feet tall, and featuring more than 200 Biblical characters, many of them life-size, the mural took many hours of Biblical research and over 2½ years to paint. Taken from Acts 2 in the Bible, the mural is artist Forger Thomson’s

historical interpretation of the day of Pentecost. The painting is unveiled several times a day with a 30-minute light and sound presentation.

The construction of the **Biblical Art Center** is distinctively Romanesque, reminiscent of early Christian-era architecture. From the limestone entrance modeled after Paul's gate in Damascus, to the heavy wooden doors, arches and stone columns, the building evoked strong memories of Biblical times. The Atrium, with its colonnade, skylights and natural stone floor, features a life-size replica of Christ's Garden Tomb at Calvary.

Operated by the Miracle at Pentecost Foundation, The **Biblical Art Center** is a non-profit, non-denominational organization founded by Dallas philanthropist Mattie Carat Byrd. As a Christian and Arts patroness, it was the founder's dream that people of every faith have the opportunity to witness the Bible as it inspires mankind in the arts.

The **Biblical Arts Center**, operated by The Miracle at Pentecost Foundation, is a non-profit, non-denominational organization not affiliated with any Church. The center is dependent on admissions, gift shops sales and your tax-deductible contributions for continued operation.

There is no admission fee charged to view the museum's galleries. An admission fee is charged for the "Miracle at Pentecost" presentation and special exhibition.

OPEN – Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Till 9 p.m. On Thursday, Sunday 1-5 p.m. Presentations of the "Miracle at Pentecost" painting last approximately 30 minutes and start at half past the hour. Times are subject to change.

George Chempitra, husband of my niece Maya George, who lives in Plano, came to see me. Maya and her two children were in Rugby, England with my sister Sushila and her husband Dr. N.V. George. I had stayed with Maya and George in Plano during my visit to Texas in 1994.

I stayed that night with Viji Chakola. I talked about our Church in Trichur and Ernakulam. Although Viji's grandfather was living in Trichur in his early career, he moved to Ernakulam and settled down in that town. His father was a Professor in a Roman Catholic College, Sacred Heart College, in Thevara, Ernakulam. Therefore we can say that Viji is from Ernakulam rather than from Trichur.

Next day we got up early morning and after breakfast went to the house of Sindhu and Raphael Thottan. I had solemnized their marriage in Trichur. Sindhu's mother is the daughter of Mr.K.T.Athony of Coimbatore. He is one of the nine Central Trustees of our Church. As a matter of fact his brother K.T.Chelukutty was one of the Trustees during my time. Another brother Advocate K.T.Mathai M.A. B.L. was a Trustee before I was born.

Raphael Thottan is the son of Sushila, sister of Deacon N.A.Timothy who was my student in the Seminary at the time of my service there as the Rector of the Seminary during 1963-64. After a hurried lunch at the Thottans they drove me to the airport to fly to Chicago to proceed to Indianapolis.

Billionaires

I happened to read the **FORBES** magazine of July 9, 2001. I had a list of the richest men in the world. According to the list there are 539 billionaires in the world. Those who have more than 10 billion are 29. The top ten are the following.

INDIA to INDIANA

Rank	Name	Country	Net worth	Industry	Age
1	William H. Gates III	U.S	58.7	Microsoft	45
2	Warren Edward Buffet	"	32.3	Investments	70
3	Paul Gardener	"	30.4	Microsoft	48
4	Lawrence Joseph Ellison	"	26.0	Oracle	56
5	Theo & Kari Albrecht	Germany	25.5	Retail	
6	Prince Alwaleed Bin Thalal Alsaud	Saudi Arabia	20.0	Investments	44
7	Gim C. Walton	U.S	18.8	Wal-Mart	53
8	John T. Walton	"	18.7	"	55
9	S. Robson	"	18.6	"	57
10	Alice L. Walton	"	18.5	"	52

The richest Indian listed is Azim Premji, who is number 42 in the list. He is aged 55 and is in the software business, His worth is 6.9 billions. The second Indian listed here is Dhirubhai Ambani and family, aged 68 . He is number 124 worth 3.4 billions. A third Indian who found a place in this list is Shiv Nadar. He is numbered 208 along with 14 others from other countries who all own 2.2 billion each. His industry is technology.

K.M. Birla is listed 292nd along with 19 others. Birla family is well known in India for more than a century. The Birla family patronized Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation. They own 1.7 million each. Birla who is only 34 years old has various different business. The magazine lists his industry as commodities.

A total of 539 billionaires are listed. I scanned through the list to check whether Osama bin Laden, the Saudi billionaire, who is suspected of having masterminded the deaths of about six thousand people in the USA on September 11, 2001 is there. No, he is not listed. Even if he is a billionaire, Forbes does not like to list terrorism as an industry.

Maharishi followers want sovereign state

PARAMARIBO. The Iowa based Maharishi University of Management wants to establish an 8,645 – acre sovereign state on rural land in the South American country of Suriname. The government of Suriname has not accepted the university's offer to invest \$1.3 billion over three years and provide 10,000 jobs.

Followers of the Maharishi Mahesh yogi – known in the 1960 s for teaching the Beatles transcendental meditation – want on lease the land in the district of Commewijne for at least 200 years to set up an agricultural society. The land, about 25 miles northeast of the capital, Paramaribo, had previously been used for farming by a now - bankrupt government agricultural foundation.

The group wants to set up what it calls a “Global Country World Peace” with its own currency, central bank, and jurisdiction, said Winston Wirht, Vice- President of the University's Maharishi Council for Economic Development of Suriname. The ministry of Agricultural in a recent letter to the council has offered to start negotiations. However, President Ronald Venetiaan, who was to have approved such a deal, has not responded to the Maharishi Council's three requests since November.

This is something to help the Surinamese people out of poverty, Wirht said. “It is a shame that Venetian does not seem willing to talk to us.” The sovereign states main industry would be organic farming and the export of produce, Wirth said. The Maharishi followers would reward Suriname each year by giving the government 1 percent of the money the sovereign state's central bank puts into circulation, Wirht said. “Suriname must be the first to offer. It is unimaginable what this country will gain, Wirht said.

There are a lot of Baptists well known in America. Recently I read

an article about famous Baptists in a family magazine called **THE CHRIST WORLD** dated May 2001 published from Secunderabad in India. Some information is worth sharing with my readers. In America there are three other Christian denominations that had more US Presidents than the Baptists. They are the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the Methodist Church. The Roman Catholic had only one US President, i.e. John F. Kennedy.

FAMOUS BAPTIST RELIGIOUS FIGURES

John Bunyan – seventeenth century author, wrote the Pilgrims Progress (1678)

William Carey (1761 – 1834) A famous English missionary who went to India and worked among the native Christians and Brahmin pundits in Serampore, Bengal.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon – nineteenth century preacher.

Alexander Maclaren (1826 – 1910) Baptist preacher, author of "Exposition of Holy Scriptures" Alexander Campbell – Founder of the Church of Christ, he was popular Baptist preacher and editor of the famous paper – The Christian Baptist.

William Miller – A Baptist in New York whose predictions that Christ would come in 1843 or 1844 were the precursor to Adventism.

Billy Graham - A famous Evangelist of our times, Billy Graham is widely regarded as the world's most popular spokesperson for Protestantism in general.

Bob Jones – Founder of Bob Jones University

Fred Phelps – An active and sometimes controversial – preacher, he is better known as an anti-latter-day Saint and anti-homosexual activist from Topeka, Kansas.

Rev. Jerry Fahlwell – popular American Evangelical leader.

FAMOUS BAPTIST PRESIDENTS

Abraham Lincoln – 16th President of the United States. Although his father was a member of Regular Baptist Churches, he is usually thought of as a Baptist. His own personal beliefs hardly tallied with those of a Baptist but rather with those of an atheist.

Warren G. Harding – 29th President of the United States

Harry S. Truman - 33rd President of the United States

Jimmy Carter – 39th President of the United States widely regarded as the first born-again President. He is an active Sunday school teacher and has written many inspirational Christian books.

William Jefferson Clinton – Is a Southern Baptist; however many in SBC take issue with him on a variety of matters including his support for homosexual and his pro-abortion stance.

OTHER WELL KNOWN BAPTISTS

John Rockefeller – American Industrialist

Al Gore – Vice President to President Clinton

Rev. Martin Luther King – Civil Rights Leader

Rev. Jessie Jackson – A black activist and founder of the Rainbow Coalition who stepped down from public life in January 2000 after fathering a child out of wedlock

Timothy McVeigh – Oklahoma City bomber.

Cholesterol

Results of New studies conducted in America on Cholesterol appeared in TIME magazine dated June 11, 2001, p.53. According to their studies 36 million Americans should be taking cholesterol-lowering drugs instead of 13 million at present. The number of the Americans who should be watching their diet and exercising more is 65 million instead of the present 52 millions.

Chapter 6

INDIANAPOLIS

On Saturday 30th June I flew from Dallas to Chicago by United Airlines. I reached Chicago O'Hare airport at about 4.30 p.m. My niece Asha and her husband Paul Furlow picked me from the airport and drove straight to Indianapolis. As we had to be in the road for about four hours we decided to start without any delay.

We were to meet Lalitha, sister of my brother in-law Cherian Puthicote (Thampy)) and her husband Achenkunju (David Oommen) on the way. I used to visit David Oommen's family in the previous visits. There was no time to visit him in this trip. Therefore we arranged that they could stand somewhere on the road and we will meet and talk with them in the restaurant area somewhere. We thought that we knew the location. Then we were not sure that they were driving in the same route or some other route. Finally we met them. We talked real fast for a few minutes. We all knew that we would be late in Indianapolis if we talked about everything we wanted to talk.

We drove straight to Indianapolis and reached there around 9 p.m. My younger brother Addison also came there from Atlanta, as I had no time to include Atlanta, Georgia in my itinerary. We talked about a lot of things. Next day my nephew Dr Saje Alex, niece Asha and her husband Paul Furlow sat around a table to read through the pages where I had already written in the book about my mother Mrs. J.D.Mookan. Mrs. Polly Reuling who had corrected some pages posted the draft to Asha who took it with her and we could all sit together and correct.

Saje's daughter Brianna was with my sister Leela in Orlando and the second daughter Christina was in India (in Udayamperur near Cochin) with her maternal grandmother. Therefore there were no children to ask unending questions to their grand uncle.

I took time TIME to telephone to Archana, married to one Dr. Sunil James. I had his name written in my diary when Archana's mother Sarah Kuruvilla mentioned it to me. I was visiting with that family in Fremont, California when Archana's marriage was fixed to Dr. Sunil James. They marry within the Knanaya community, an ethnic group who migrated to Kerala from Iraq in 345 A.D. under the leadership of Thomas of Kana, a Syrian merchant. After finding out the telephone number from the directory I called him. I was not sure that he was the same person; I asked whether his wife's name was Archana. That was not the appropriate way of enquiry.

I told him that I was a friend of the Kuruvilla family. He sounded not very friendly. Therefore to impress him favourably I told that I was a friend of his bishop, Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery, Bishop of Kottayam. The diocese of Kottayam in the Syro-Malabar community belongs to the Knanaya Catholic church.. The comment had a negative effect. He observed, "But you sound like a young man." I laughed. I told him that I had completed 61 years of age. Of course his bishop Mar Kuriakose Kunnassery is older. He is over 71 years. Most of my contemporaries are older.

Saje is a busy doctor. His wife Sonia, who is dentist, is also busy. Who will mow the lawn? The machine in the garage will walk out to the garden and mow the ground at the appointed time as programmed by Saje. I had not seen such a machine when I was a student there. So I asked for some information on it. He told me that I could access it in www.robomower. I did it after I reached India. With music the website informs us.

Revolutionary, Safe, Simple, Convenient, Friendly Robotics. Buy the only serious, affordable, fully automatic lawnmower. Press a button and you are free to do other things. Your presence on the lawn is no longer required. It mows, you don't.

On Sunday I had to bless the new house of Josmon Chakola. I had celebrated his wedding at St. Thomas Church, Ernakulam. Both are computer engineers. He is the elder brother of Mathew (Viji) Chakola in Dallas, Texas with whom I was staying the previous day. Their father Prof. George Chakola of Ernakulam had asked me to visit both his sons in this trip.

The new house was just complete for the time I was there. Fortville is the name of the town near Indianapolis where the new spacious house is built in 13687 in Hawstone Drive. Several new houses are being built in that area..After blessing the new home we went to an Indian restaurant for supper. Josmon's friend was with us with his wife and mother. They are Hindus. They are close friends from their student days in Kerala. I was impressed by the fact that these colleagues are so close without feeling the difference of caste or creed. In India in recent years some fanatics have fanned communal tension in some areas. Our state of Kerala has better communal harmony than some places in North India.

Josmon's son Ronnel was a little hesitant to be friendly with me. Ronnel, I think, is one and a half years old. He was very close to Suresh, the friend of his father. Although I boasted that I was a good babysitter in Princeton I could not make friends with him that easily. Perhaps my beard scared him. He gave up his aversion to me only when I was about to leave.

On 2nd July 2001 I concluded my tour. My return ticket was from

Chicago to Delhi. Saje bought a ticket from Indianapolis to Chicago. This was also by the United Airlines; the advantage of buying ticket by the same airline was that my baggage checking-in was done in Indianapolis. Otherwise I will have to take it out in Chicago and again check-in. This was very convenient. Moreover the gate of arriving from Indianapolis to Chicago was closer to the gate of departure from Chicago to India. Even the boarding pass of departure from Chicago was issued in Indianapolis itself.

I was in a very much-relaxed mood while leaving Indianapolis. In Chicago I got some free time to write a small portion of this travelogue. When I reached London we had to run from one end to another to catch the Delhi flight. We were very tired. Fortunately some vehicles were there to transport us to the gate of departure. One old man was near us. The security officials noted that there was one stamp missing on the boarding pass. He ran back to ask the security man to put the stamp. He had to rush back to catch the flight. I overheard him complaining that you could have verified through phone and got clearance instead of asking me to run and get the boarding pass stamped. I do not know at how many places this security should be stamped. If he were a heart patient he would have collapsed. The passengers do not want to miss the flight.

The passengers standing in my queue were getting restless. Had the authorities announced that there was some more delay for the departure of the flight, we would have been less restless. As the scheduled departure time was about to expire we were worried that the announcement would come that the flight was about to depart and the remaining passengers could try their luck in the next flight.

An announcement was made that there were not enough seats for all the passengers. Three passengers were asked to volunteer. We would be given \$1000 and accommodation for the night. I had heard

about the offer of \$500 before. I never volunteered, because I had urgent programmes always. But this time I could spare a day. I could visit the family of my sister, if I got one day. I volunteered. Later they said that there were six volunteers and they needed only three. Somebody said that it was a computer mistake. Two friends refused to return to the aircraft from which we were lured to come out. But I decided to go back. What God has given, God has taken. What the United Airlines offered, the United Airlines took back. A minute earlier I thought that I was going to be rich by \$1000. That was gone. We went back.

The next day when we reached Delhi, about ten passengers did not receive their baggage. I have a suspicion they offloaded our baggage instead of the persons. For persons they have to pay \$1000. But by offloading the baggages of ten passengers, they reduced the weight of about six passengers, if the average weight of the passengers is about 75 kilogram. I do not know why the baggage was delayed. There is no rhyme or reason for the non-delivery of our baggage at the time of our arrival. Most of us did not live in Delhi. We went to our destinations requesting them to forward our baggage to the nearest airports.

They did it. But my glucometer to test the blood for diabetes was stolen. I could not get any compensation, because I had forgotten to mention the glucometer ACCU CHECK in the contents of my baggage. When we reached the middle of the night after waiting for one hour to get through the immigration and searching for the baggage, we could not remember all the items of the contents of the delayed baggage.

“What about your shoes?” a kind lady asked me after looking at my claim list. I replied that I did not wear any shoes. I was wearing my bathroom slippers even in the US Congress building in Washington

D.C. I lost my ACCU CHECK monitor worth about \$ 100 because the baggage was handled in our absence and some body must have taken it. The only way to avoid such loss is to make sure that baggage is handled efficiently. I hope that the United Airlines will instruct their staff to load all baggage of the passengers. The Airlines did not give us any reason for their failure to carry the checked-in baggage of the passengers.

On July 4th I arrived at the Cochin airport. Contrary to my usual experience the Vicar General and Committee members of the Marth Mariam parish were present at the airport with flowers to receive me. I was returning after attending the Holy Synod. I had represented the whole Church of India at the Holy Synod. Moreover I had my birthday completing 61 years when I was away in the Holy Synod. Mart Mariam cathedral parish and the Youths Association had sent e-mails wishing me a happy birthday. I was happy to be back with my people after an absence of one month.

Aftermath of September 11

During this trip in June I went near Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Looking at that bastion of Defense secrets, I could not believe that an aircraft could crash into it.

The tragedy of September 11 in Pentagon and World Trade Center in New York has ramification on the world travel. In addition to the 6000 people killed and 6000 people wounded in the World Trade Center on September 11, about 400 passengers perished in the air in all the four Boeings hijacked on that day. Two Boeings went into the WTC building and one into Pentagon building, while the fourth Boeing crashed in Pennsylvania. The official count of the dead and the missing in WTC tragedy on September 11 is below 3900 according to the revised count by November 21. There were some names in

duplicates. The lower figure is after removing duplications and errors.

The first hit on the World Trade Center was at 8.45 a.m. by the hijacked 767. It was on the north side. This hit ignited more than 20,000 gallons of jet fuel. At 9.03 the second hijacked Boeing 767 slammed into the southeast corner. At 10.29 a.m. the tower of the WTC building collapsed.

On September 30 Indian Congress leader Madhavarao Scindia and six others were killed when a Beach craft King Air C.90 exploded in mid-air over Manipur in North India.

Some airlines have closed their offices in India. The luxury hotels in India have 15 to 20 percent drops in occupancy. Some hotels have slashed prices in order to survive. The marketing strategies will not save the tourism industry.

Tourism will be cheaper. But it is not a priority list for many people. Already there is a steep decline in the passenger traffic. Maybe this will be the final travelogue I write.

Four airport crashes within one month. The loss is about 10 billion dollars or in Indian reckoning 1000 crore dollars. If one converts it into Indian rupees it is 47 times more i.e. Rs. 47 thousand crore. How this is going to affect the airline industry in India is yet to be seen after the US strikes on Afghanistan.

Pentagon building is three times more spacious than the Empire State Building in New York. It is the biggest office building in the world. This building was not strong enough to withstand crash of the American Airlines flight No. 77 on September 11th. The total loss of lives is 124 staff of the Pentagon and 53 passengers and six crew of the aircraft.

Ronald Regan National airport is only 4 miles from the Pentagon building. The airport started functioning after a few days. But now the flights are not going near the Pentagon building.

During the World War II the defense offices working in 17 different buildings were brought under one roof. It is an irony of history that the construction of this huge edifice was begun in 1941 on September. I do not know whether Osama Bin Laden studied American history enough to attack Pentagon on its 60th birthday.

This building covers an area of 29 acres. The total length of the corridors is 15 and half miles. There are 131 staircases and 13 elevators 19 escalators in this five-storied building. There are 4,200, clocks and 16,250 lights where 250 bulbs are replaced daily. There are 284 toilets and 691 water fountains. There are 7754 windows to this building. The number of portal articles handled is 1.2 million per month. The powerful Defense Secretary of the American government has his office in this building.

Pentagon has many modern gadgets that precisely know all the military operations anywhere in the world. It is incredible to think that with all these sophisticated equipments and brains Pentagon could neither predict nor prevent American aircraft flying into it.

Many are scared of air travel. An Internet friend of mine put the following information on the Internet stating that his next journey will be by ship and not by plane. The reasons he gives below.

Travelling by air was never safe. Despite the propaganda techniques by the airline industry in the face of lack in security and maintenance, I hope that many more people will wake up to this fact and use other transportation means. I certainly will. My next trip overseas will be by ship!

Major plane crashes in the last 20 years (let alone the other ones):

Sept. 11, 2001: American Airlines flight and United flight en route to Los Angeles from Boston crash into World Trade Center after being hijacked; more than 4,000 dead and missing, including 157 on planes.

Sept. 11, 2001: American Flight 77 en route from Washington's Dulles International Airport to Los Angeles is hijacked and crashes into Pentagon; 189 dead and missing, including 64 on plane.

Sept. 11, 2001: United Airlines Flight 93 en route from Newark, N.J., to San Francisco is hijacked and crashes near Pittsburgh; 44 killed.

Oct. 31, 2000: Singapore Airlines jumbo jet slams into object before takeoff for Los Angeles and bursts into flames; 81 killed.

July 25, 2000: Air France Concorde headed to New York crashes into hotel outside Paris shortly after takeoff; 113 killed.

July 17, 2000: Alliance Air Boeing 737-200 crashes into houses during second landing attempt at Patna, India; 51 killed.

April 19, 2000: Air Philippines flight from Manila crashes on approach to Davao, Philippines; 131 killed.

Jan. 31, 2000: Alaska Airlines Flight 261 plunges into ocean off Southern California on flight from Mexico to San Francisco; 88 killed.

Jan. 30, 2000: Kenya Airways A-310 crashes into Atlantic Ocean shortly after takeoff from Abidjan, Ivory Coast, to Lagos, Nigeria; 169 killed.

- Oct. 31, 1999: Egypt Air Boeing 767 crashes into Atlantic after taking off from John F. Kennedy Airport in New York on flight to Cairo; 217 killed.
- Feb. 24, 1999: China Southwest Airlines plane crashes in field in China's coastal Zhejiang province; 61 killed.
- Dec. 11, 1998: Thai Airways International A-310 crashes on domestic flight during third landing attempt at Surat Thani, Thailand; 101 killed.
- Sept. 2, 1998: Swissair Flight 111 from New York to Geneva crashes off Nova Scotia; 229 killed.
- Feb. 16, 1998: Airbus A300 owned by Taiwan's China Airlines crashes near Taipei's Chiang Kai-shek Airport while trying to land after flight from Bali, Indonesia; 196 killed.
- Feb. 2, 1998: Cebu Pacific Air DC-9 crashes into mountain in southern Philippines; 104 killed.
- Aug. 5, 1997: A Korean Air Boeing 747 crashes near Guam Island; 228 killed.
- Nov. 12, 1996: Saudi 747 collides shortly after takeoff with Kazak Ilyushin-76 making its landing approach; 349 killed.
- July 17, 1996: TWA Flight 800, a Paris-bound 747, explodes and crashes off New York's Long Island shortly after takeoff from Kennedy International; 230 killed.
- May 11, 1996: Cargo hold fire causes Miami-to-Atlanta ValuJet flight to crash in the Florida Everglades; 110 killed.
- Feb. 6, 1996: A Turkish-owned Boeing 757 leased by Alas Nacionales slams into Atlantic after takeoff from Dominican Republic; 189 killed.

Dec. 20, 1995: American Airlines Boeing 757 flying from Miami to Cali, Colombia, crashes into mountainside near Cali; 159 killed, four survive.

Sept. 8, 1994: Pittsburgh-bound USAir Flight 427 rolls out of control and spirals 6,000 feet into ravine six minutes before it is due to land; 132 killed.

Jan. 25, 1990: New York-bound Avianca Flight 052 runs out of fuel and crashes in Long Island; 73 dead.

Dec. 21, 1988: Pan Am Boeing 747 crashes in terrorist bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland; 270 killed.

July 3, 1988: Iran Air A300 Airbus shot down by USS Vincennes over Persian Gulf; 290 killed.

Aug. 16, 1987: Northwest Airlines Flight 255 slams into freeway overpass after takeoff from Detroit Metropolitan Airport; 156 killed.

Nov. 28, 1987: South African Airways 747 crashes off island of Mauritius in Indian Ocean; 160 killed.

Aug. 12, 1985: Japan Air Lines 747 crashes into mountain on domestic flight; worst single-aircraft crash toll in aviation industry; 520 killed.

June 23, 1985: Air India Boeing 747 crashes off coast of Ireland because of terrorist-planted bomb; 329 killed.

Nov. 27, 1983: Avianca Boeing 747 crashes near Madrid's Barajas airport; 183 killed.

Sept. 1, 1983: Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 shot down by Soviet fighter after flying through Soviet airspace near Sakhalin Island; 269 killed.

The crashing of the American Airlines flight on November 12, 2001 within a few minutes after the take off from the Kennedy airport in

New York has added to this fear of flying. Yet I believe that the planes will fly and the passengers will make use of them.

I too may write travelogues again. Who knows?

BOOKS BY DR MAR APREM

Biographies

1. Mar Thoma Darmo-A Biography pp. 214, 1974
2. Mar Abimalek Timotheus-A Biography pp. 282, 1975
3. Mar Abdisho Thondanat pp. 136, 1987
4. Strange But True: An Autobiography pp. 236, 1981
5. Not So Strange: An Autobiography Part II pp. 236, 1991

Church History

6. Nestorian Fathers (out of print) pp. 168, 1976
7. Nestorian Missions (Reprint 1985) pp. 134, 1976
8. The Chaldean Syrian Church in India pp. 241, 1977
9. The Council of Ephesus of 431 pp. 196, 1978
10. Sacraments of the Church of the East pp. 142, 1978
11. Nestorian Theology pp. 183, 1978
12. Nestorian Lectionary & Julian Calendar pp. 140, 1982
13. Western Missions Among Assyrians pp. 152, 1982
14. A Nestorian Bibliography pp. 128, 1982
15. Indian Christian Who is Who pp. 210, 1983
16. The Chaldean Syrian Church of the East
(ISPCK, Delhi) (out of Print) pp. 64, 1984
17. Good News Festivals in India pp. 224, 1984
18. Indian Christian Directory pp. 264, 1984
19. Mar Aprem, Theologian & Poet pp. 136, 1990

Travelogues

20. America Revisited pp. 148, 1977
21. From Bagdad to Chicago pp. 168, 1985
22. Australian Assyrians pp. 132, 1988
23. To Belgium and Holland via UK & USA pp. 124, 1989
24. Sydney to Canberra pp. 128, 1989
25. The Assyrians in Iraq pp. 112, 1990
26. Germany Via Vienna pp. 140, 1991
27. Washington to New York pp. 133, 1992
28. London to Moscow pp. 134, 1993
29. Los Angeles to Tokyo pp. 136, 1993
30. Oxford to Austria pp. 144, 1994
31. Salzburg to Boston pp. 140, 1995

32. Israel, Scandinavia & U.S.A.	pp. 112,	1996
33. Hassake to Hollywood	pp. 112,	1998
34. Italy, Liban & Iran	pp. 112,	1998
35. To U.K. Via U.S.A.	pp. 104,	1999
36. U.S.A., Canada, Europe and Thailand	pp. 104,	2000
37. Austria to Australia	pp. 104,	2001
38. India to Indiana	pp. 112,	2002

Humour

39. Bishop's Jokes (Reprint 1995)	pp. 180,	1983
40. Laugh with the Bishop (Bombay)	pp. 95,	1988
41. Laugh to Health (C.L.S., Madras)	pp. 82,	1992
42. Holy Humour	pp. 104,	1993
43. Joy to the World	pp. 104,	1994
44. Holy Smile	pp. 100,	1997

General

45. From Relief to Development A profile of CASA	pp. 282,	1979
46. Teach Yourself Aramaic (Reprint, 1993)	pp. 152,	1981
47. Behold the Cross of Calvary	pp. 208,	1987
48. Sermons from the Gospels Vol. I	pp. 208,	1988
49. Sermons from the Gospels Vol. II	pp. 138,	1990
50. The Nestorian Canon Law	pp. 120,	1995
51. Mesopotamia Light	pp. 128,	1993
52. Voices of the East	pp. 112,	1998
53. Mother of the Motherless	pp. 112,	2002

Malayalam

54. An Introduction to the History of the Eastern Churches (Reprint, 1990)	pp.196,	1976
55. Christecya Bhakti Ganangal	pp. 124,	1985
56. സഭാചരിത്ര നിഘണ്ടു	pp. 424,	1985
57. ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ കാൽപ്പാടുകളിലൂടെ	pp. 168,	1985

To be published (2002 - 2003)

58. Assyrian Fathers		
59. Syriac Manuscripts in India		
60. Poems & Prayers		
61. History of the Assyrian Church in the 20th century		
62. Advanced Aramaic		

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem (formerly George Mookken) was born in Trichur, Kerala, India, in June 1940. Educated in India, England and America, he specialised in Church History. He was the President of the Church History Association of India.

He holds two master's degrees in Church History, one from the United Theological College, Bangalore (M. Th, of Serampore, 1966) and the other from the Union Theological Seminary, New York (S.T.M. degree, 1967). He was a candidate for Doctor of Theology (Th.D) degree at Princeton Theological Seminary, U.S.A., when he was consecrated bishop in Bagdad, Iraq in 1968. Later he earned his D.Th. degree from Serampore University, near Calcutta.

Ordained a deacon on June 25, 1961, he became a priest on the day he completed twenty five years of age on 13 June, 1965. He was consecrated Bishop on 21st September, 1968 and promoted as a Metropolitan eight days later in Bagdad.

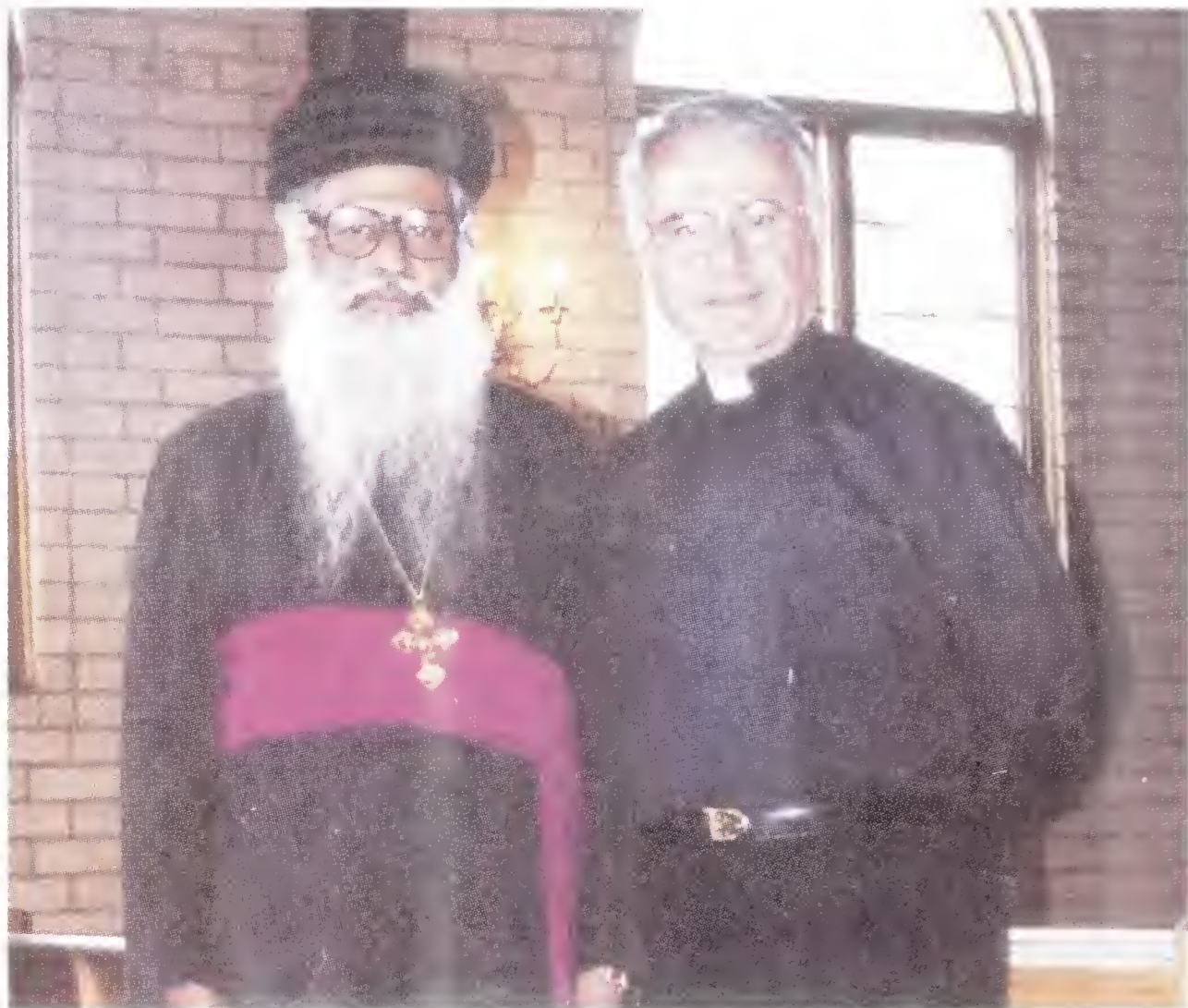
His biography appears in the **International Who's Who of Intellectuals**, Vol. 6, Cambridge, the **International directory of Distinguished Leadership**, first Edition, U.S.A. and others.

He was given 'Men of Achievement' Award of the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge, England in 1984, and the 'Medal of Merit' of the Coptic Orthodox Cultural Centre, Venice for his cultural and ecumenical achievements.

Since 1968, he is the Head of the Church of the East in India with his headquarters in Trichur. He is active in several religious and social organisations all over India.



Catholicos Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV, three archbishops (Mar Narsai of Lebanon, Mar Aprim of India & Mar Gewargis of Iraq) and 5 bishops (Mar Emmanuel of Canada, Mar Aprim of Arizona, Mar Meelis of Australia, Mar Bawai Soro of Seattle and Mar Odisho Orahram of Europe who were present in the Holy Synod of April 1999 were present in the Holy Synod of June 2001. Bishop Mar Aprim Athneil of Syria who was consecrated in October 1999 was the only new member present in this Holy Synod. His photo is given separately. The 1999 photo is reproduced here, as there was no group photo of 2001.



During Holy Synod, Mar Aprem talks with Fr. Khoshaba Bouza,
Vicar of Mart Mariam Church, Roselle.



Santosh and Suma Nadakavukaran in Downers Grove near Chicago
with Mar Aprem 10 June 2001



Supper with the children of Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage with parents who adopted them .



Washington D.C. Mar Aprem and Cosmic Ovungal



Mar Aprem, Carol and Dr. Jonathan Sanford



Holy land Experience in Orlando, Florida. Joe Mookan and Mar Aprem with their sister's granddaughter Brianna



Mar Aprem with sister Leela and her husband Prof. Alexander Alex and their daughter Brianna in Disney Market, Orlando 26 June 2001



Mar Aprem's niece Maya with her husband George Jacob and their children Kristina and George in Dallas, Texas.



Josmon George Chackola's new home in Fortville near Indianapolis. Left to Right: Addison Mookken, Josmon George, Mar Aprem, Dr.Saje Alex, Josmon's wife Dhanusree, Dr.Saji 's wife Dr.Sonia, Josmon"s son Ronnell in the hands of a family friend from Kerala, Mrs. Suresh. July1, 2001



Mathew Chakola with his American wife Sally John with their child Mally, Kaitty and David.



Mar Aprem's niece Asha with her American husband Paul and their daughter Sophie in Chicago.



Four girls and one boy adopted from the Mar Timotheus Memorial Orphanage, Kalathode, Trichur, Kerala (founded in 1962) are seen with the Metropolitan Mar Aprm in Chicago (Left to Right : Alice, John, Mary, Reena and Anne) with their parents (Polly-Reuling, Eleanor Thomasula Sandy & Dr. Primal De Lenerolle and Paul Tomasula) 16 June 2001